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SOCCER

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$3.30 AUST & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY

NSL - BASED PLAYERS' LAST CHANCE v JAPAN

National Soccer League players are likely to get a look-in this week when national coach, Frank Farina, unveils his team for the July 15 friendly international against Japan.

Fringe players whom Farina have found tough to accommodate in the side during the world cup qualifiers over the past four months, will get a chance to impress and displace the more — established regulars.

Farina admitted that with most of the clubs in Europe preparing for the start of the season in their various countries, it was unrealistic to expect them to release their key players for friendlies now.

According to him, it would not be easy to get a squad of European-based players for the Japanese friendly, which was why he was opening the door to NSL stars to prove themselves.

Despite the fact that Australia is yet to find out the identity of its next World Cup opponent - which is coming out of South America - Farina insists that he still needs to take another look at some players from the NSL who can still break into the squad.

The national coach expects the Japanese to provide tough opposition to the Socceroos ahead of the World Cup qualifiers, while further hoping that the fixture would eventually graduate to be an annual home-away item on the international calendar of both countries.

After the Japan game, Australia will play Solomon Islands in a commemorative game to open the new Solomon Islands national stadium.

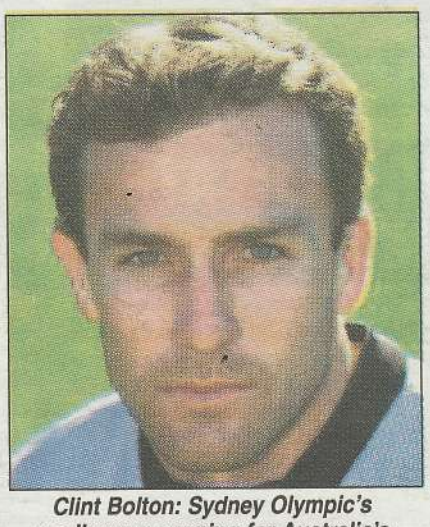
A handful of NSL stars featured for the Socceroos in the April, 2001 World Cup qualifiers in Coffs Harbour, with Scott Chipperfield, Archie Thompson, Clint Bolton, Lindsay Wilson, Con Boutsianis and Damian Mori starting in most of the games.

With Australia romping to easy wins and amassing an awesome 27 goals while conceeding none, hopes were high that the home-based players would get some recognition as the qualifiers progressed.

In the Confederations Cup as well as the two crunch games against New Zealand however, it was a totally-different scenario as the Europe-based contingent swept-in to pick up all the starting shirts.

Apart from two substitute appearances at the Confederations Cup by Thompson and Chipperfield, the NSL stars were practically frozen-out of the team.

Against New Zealand, only Chipperfield made it as as far as the bench, but never got to play as David Zdrilic, John Aloisi and Brett Emerton ran the show.



Clint Bolton: Sydney Olympic's goalkeeper gunning for Australia's Number One shirt.

Frank Farina: Final chance for NSL players to secure a National team berth.

• Mexican striker, Daniel Osorno (right) about to score the opening goal against Chile in their Copa America clash, yesterday morning. Mexico won 2-0 to cruise into the semi-finals where they will lock horns with Uruguay.

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Spotlight on Balgownie Rangers Soccer Club

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Socceroos are FIFA's Team Of 2001!

Socceroos celebrating a fine moment in their World Cup qualifier against NZ. Their performance has earned Australia recognition from FIFA.

Australia continued it's upward climb on the FIFA World Ranking stage last week, moving up another four places in the latest rankings issued. Although Costa Rica can was justifiably the most-successful team of the month, FIFA's Team-of-the-Year award went to the Socceroos, who made even more headway (46th, up four places) on the Ranking.

A bronze medal at the recent Confederations Cup boosted Australia into the top 50 for the last rankings, while the two victories over New Zealand in the recent World Cup Qualifiers have placed Australia in 46th position in July.

The result means that Australia has virtually sealed award of FIFA's Team-of-the-Year, after jumping 18 places in the June rankings, from 68 to 50, on the back of the successful Confederations Cup performance.

The biggest movers on the rankings all come from South America where the Copa America is now in full swing, with Paraguay moving up two spots to 8th place, Colombia up 4 places to 14th, Uruguay moving up to 30th, and Costa Rica gaining 13 places to No. 33.

Despite its recent poor performances, Brazil continues to hold down the second spot, behind World, Confederation and European Champion, France.

LEAKED REPORT CREATES TENSION IN SOUTH

South Melbourne officials were shocked last week on learning that a rival group had leaked parts of the "Hatcher Report", a highly confidential document delivered earlier

this year to the board of the Club, to members of the public.

"The Hatcher Report detailed at an intimate level the structure and running of our club, and provided a blueprint for our operations in the future. That someone could leak it in part or full is just unthinkable." said George Vasilopoulos, the club's outgoing president.

"These people have engaged in what can only be described as a blatant act of sabotage. I can't even begin to imagine the damage that this is going to do to the club."

"It clearly compromises the position of our club, by making critical strategic information available to our rivals. The real motives of anyone who would arm opposition clubs with our confidential internal documents must seriously be questioned".

Hopkins eyes Cosmos' vacant position

Former Welsh International and Eastern Pride coach, Jeff Hopkins has thrown his hat in the ring for the vacant coaching position at the Canberra Cosmos, following the sudden departure of Mike Milovanovic.

Hopkins, 37, knows all about getting credible results on a tight budget, and is renowned for being a player's coach, bringing the best out of his charges consistently.

"I'd love the opportunity to coach a progressive club like the Cosmos" said Hopkins. "I believe the club has great potential"

Hopkins played over 500 matches in England for Reading, Fulham and Crystal Palace, and was capped 16 times for Wales.

Canberra Cosmos coach Milan (Mike) Milovanovic surprisingly threw in the towel last week after negotiations over a new contract for him fell through.

In his explanation to the Canberra Times, Milovanic stated that "(Chairman) Danny (Moulis) and I met a couple of times during the week and I felt we had reached a framework that we were both fairly happy with it, but the board were not".

"They offered me a deal and I wasn't prepared to accept it. I'm disappointed for myself for a lot of reasons. I thought I had a lot to offer the Canberra Cosmos.

Jeff Hopkins: Aiming to become Cosmos' new coach.

"Danny and I could have got this club going again, but in the end we couldn't reach an amicable financial arrangement," said Milovanovic — who will return to his coaching job at the ACT Sport Academy.

Milovanovic rtook over from Tom Sermanni as Cosmos head coach in February and was expected to begin pre-season training last week. The beleaguered club had just won an appeal for reinstatement into the NSL after being culled, along with Brisbane Strikers, in June.

EX-PRIDE, KATZ, PICKS UP CAREER IN US

By Graham Cooke

Former Eastern Pride midfielder Michael Katz is playing soccer in the United States and hopes to join a university there on scholarship, his father, Dan, said last week.

Katz played his junior football in Canberra for Tuggeranong United, and had a spell at the ACT Academy of Sport before moving on to the Pride.

After the club effectively folded in mid-season, Katz contacted the Canberra Cosmos but was firmly rejected. "They told him they already had sufficient players under contract, which is ironical considering the situation they are in now," Dan said.

The holder of a US passport, Katz jnr. crossed the Pacific to link up with the Indiana Invaders, based in South Bend and playing in a competition called the Premier Development League, which is a feeder competition to the Major League. With three games to play, they are in the finals race.

Dan said Michael had applied to join the George Mason University of Virginia. "His aim is to study and play football and hopefully get noticed by one of the Major League clubs," he said.

Whatever happens, it looks as if he will be away from Australia for some time."

Despite trans-Tasman influx, Kingz vow to give Kiwis a chance

Big-spending Football Kingz FC have given New Zealand players within its ranks hope of lacing boots for the Auckland-based side.

While unfolding its latest capture of another big NSL star, Vas Kalogeracos, Kingz General Manager, Chris Turner last week dismissed suggestions that the club was indifferent to exploiting the talents of Kiwi players as it strengthens the squad towards next season's national soccer league.

With the acquisition of Kalogeracos from South Melbourne , there were growing fears that more Australian players were on their way to the Kingz, who are the sole New Zealand club competing in the NSL. The mood amongst the club's Kiwi players is increasingly becoming that of despair.

Vas Kalogeracos: Kingz' latest acquisition.

"One of the key things to helping Kiwi players develop is not only giving them a career path and an opportunity, but also to play with the best possible players to lift them to the next level," Turner countered last week.

"People have to wait and see what the balance of the 18-man squad is but there will also be other Kiwi performance-based contracts on top of that, like we had last year with Simon Eaddie and Tim Stevens."

"We're fairly well down the track with looking to set up apprenticeship/scholarship type schemes where we can have one or two young promising Kiwi players training with the team," Turner said. "We believe there's some very good talent in New Zealand and we've got a list of players."

The club also, like other NSL sides, has the option of signinga maximum of three overseas players, on the team sheet during league game. Turner revealed therefore that there was the possibility of a couple of players in Europe coming over, which did little to assuage the fears of the Kiwi home contingent.

Meanwhile, the signing of South Melbourne's Kalogeracos, brings to five the number of ex-South players and official now plying their trade at the Kingz.

There is also a possibility last year's player-coach, Wynton Rufer signing -up for another season. Rufer, whose brother Shane is new coach Mickey Petersen's assistant, met with the Kingz without any concrete agreement after initial talks.

Australia's Oldest International, 93 Not Out

By John Economos

JOHNNY WATKISS, (for many, the best player Australia has produced), was recently called upon and sent on a special mission.

The placid, powerful Australian international, was asked to pay a visit in hospital to another special former Australian international.

In fact the patient Watkiss was asked to visit, is the oldest living Australian Soccer international.

Watkiss, himself a former triple World Cup campaigner, (1965, 1969 and 1974), together with wife Judy, drove straight to the Canterbury Hospital in Sydney to visit one Jim Osborne.

Mr Osborne today is 93 years of age and the old former Australian international was recently admitted into hospital to have some tests on his heart as well as for blood pressure.

Jim Osborne played for the old club called 'Metters' as well as for Australia against New Zealand.

He also played against New Caledonia in the early 1900s.

The tours in those days stretched over six weeks which involved long travelling times by sea.

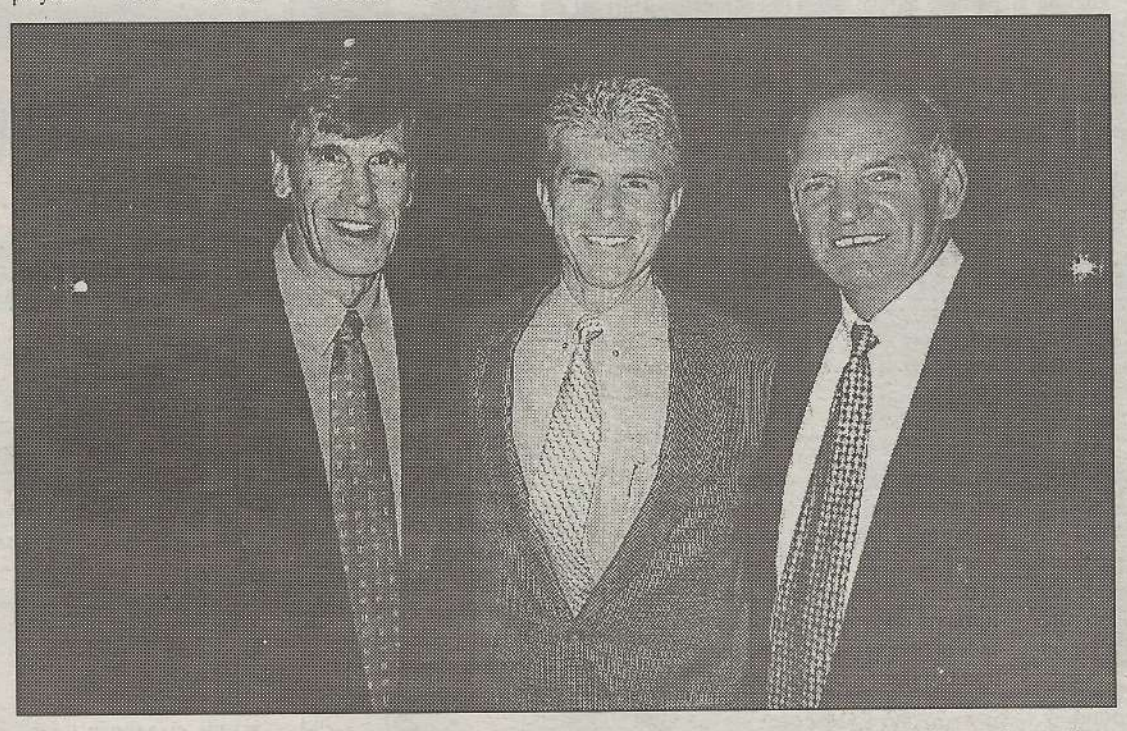
When Watkiss informed ABSW last night about Mr Osborne, the great past international told us: "Despite Jim's age of 93, he looked to me most terrific.

"In fact Jim looked very sprightly indeed," Watkiss conveyed to us.

Jim Osborne's son, Barry, played with former Australian World Cup captain, Johnny Warren for the old Canterbury side in 1958 as teenagers in 3rd Grade.

Watkiss who also had kicked off his career with the famous Canterbury Club, then moved to play for Apia and Hakoah.

The wonderful Watkiss soon graduated into the international arena where he played for Australia as a centre-back, central midfielder and even striker.



The Holy Strike Trio, from the left, Johnny Watkiss, Ernie Campbell and Ray Baartz all former Australian International marksman.

Against Israel in our final World Cup qualifier in 1970, the superbly talented Watkiss played as a striker.

Watkiss scored in Australia's 1-1 draw against Israel at the old Sydney Sports Ground.

Other great Australian international strikers in Watkiss' era, included Hakoah's lethal left footer, Ray Baartz who in the mid 60s had a stint with Manchester United.

Another ace striker was Ernie Campbell.

Campbell embossed his name in the history books whilst playing for Apia in the NSW 1969 Grand Final.

St George Budapest with just nine minutes left of play was leading 2-0.

The cracking Campbell cut loose and scored a shattering hat-trick in those last nine minutes to steal the Championship from Frank Arok's St George.

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Times:
Start at 7.00pm

For Further Information Ring the Club Secretary Jack Cirjanic on
☎ (02) 9823-7714

SBS TO BLOW WHISTLE ON AUSSIE SOCCER

This week on Thursday July 26, 2001 SBS TV investigates the troubled state of Australian Soccer, in a new programme, Insight.

Australia's national Soccer team may be scoring goals around the world in a bid for a place at the next World Cup, but back in Australia many people are outraged about the way the game is being run.

In the past twelve months, two National Soccer League teams have collapsed mid-season, and two more had been dumped, then re-instated during an aborted restructuring process.

Meanwhile, the Board of Soccer Australia, charged with running Soccer in this country, is being torn apart by infighting.

In this program 'INSIGHT', SBS reporter Alan Sunderland, the players, the fans and the officials speak out about the troubled state of Australian Soccer.

Robbie Slater, former International and Northern Spirit club captain says, "If they had any decency or any love for the game, you know, decent love for the game, they would resign.

Other stars of the game agree. Craig Foster, the Socceroo player who's recently returned from overseas to play Soccer in Australia, says other players warned him the local game was in disarray.

"We've gone along the same track for many years. An this is where we've arrived at, and it's pretty poor. In fact, it's a disgrace", he says.

Alan Sunderland's story will investigate allegations of mismanagement and poor administration at the heart of Australian Soccer and the impact it has had on a code of football more popular with Australian children than any other.

Scheduled for 8.30pm on Thursday might Insight will be hosted by SBS debutante, Jenny Brocki.

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Womens Super League	**U21's**
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Mens State League	**U21's**
Mens State League	**U18's**
Youth League	**U13, U14, U15, U16's**
Junior League	**U11, U12's**
Girls Youth League	**U14, U16's**

Nepean is a Club on the move with an emphasis on Player Development.

Contact John Todd - Assistant Secretary
Representatives on: W (02) 4721 5011
H (02) 4735 1293
M 0418 969 540
for an application form.

Applications Close 17th August, 2001

PARRAMATTA EAGLES SOCCER ACADEMY

ACADEMY TEAM COACHES

Parramatta Eagles and Mancheser United Football Club have recently entered into an agreement to operate a Soccer Academy based in Sydney and covering the Oceania region.

Academy players will be competing in the New South Wales Super Youth League and Cadet League competitions.

The Academy is seeking applications for Academy Team Coaches for Season 2002.
The successful applicant will:

- Have attained, or be currently undertaking, a senior coaching (Level 2) qualification.
- Have a strong level of experience and success in coaching elite youth teams.
- Be able to work as part of a team within the Academy structure.

Coaches will be required to work within the Manchester United Youth Development curriculum, reporting to the Director of Coaching and working with specialist Academy Coaching staff.

We seek applicants who are looking to make a long-term commitment to the Academy and be part of the most exciting development in elite Youth Soccer in the Oceania region.

Please submit your application, including resume, to:

The Chairman
Academy Management Council
Parramatta Eagles Soccer Academy
Melita Stadium, Everley Road,
Chester Hill. NSW. 2162

OFFICIAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PARTNER OF MANCHESTER UNITED IN OCEANIA

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

WOLLONGONG WOLVES, Australia's National League champions for the past two seasons, will fly out of Sydney next month bound for China.

Stuart Young: Wollongong's ace marksman and new captain.

Coach Ronnie Corry will be taking his rebuilt NSL squad to the Orient on a 10 day bonding tour during which the current National League champions will play three friendly exhibition matches.

Travelling with Corry's squad will be his off-season new signings, 19 year old attacking left midfielder, Naum Sekulovski, (signed from the Eastern Pride), central defender, Buddy Farah, (former Marconi), Alex Castro (from the Canberra Cosmos) and mobile striker Sean Babic (from Marconi).

Meanwhile Corry has been in Fiji since last week on a well-earned holiday with his wife and are due back in Sydney next Monday.

❑❑❑❑

TONY POPOVIC, Australia's World Cup central marker, has just completed his five year contract in the J-League with Sanfrecce Hiroshima.

Former Australian national manager, Eddie Thomson, signed up Popovic when Thomson was head coach at Hiroshima.

It's believed now that some clubs from Spain and England are casting an eye over this for Sydney Croatia sweeper.

The quicker Popovic signs with a club, the better Frank Farina will like it.

Popovic cannot linger in limbo as the lanky defender urgently needs weekly competitive activity to retain form for Australia's critical internationals coming up in November.

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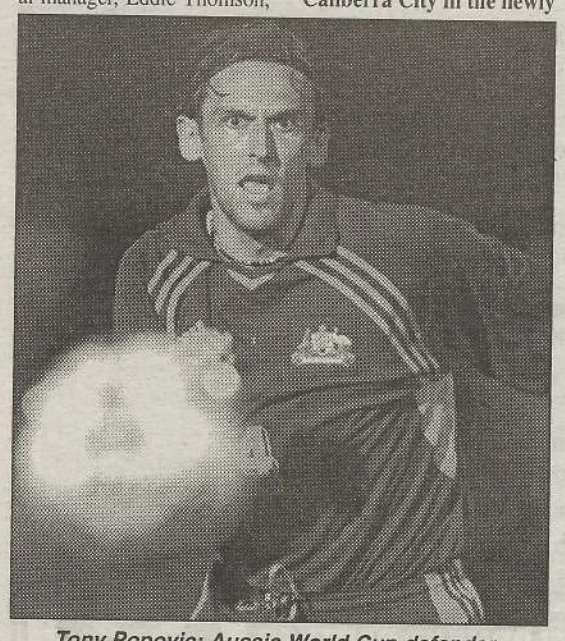

Tony Popovic: Aussie World Cup defender, currently without a club.

The Cottam Cup Final, the oldest Soccer knock-out competition trophy in Australia, will be played tomorrow, (Wednesday July 25th), at the Melita Stadium.

Kick off has been set down for 7.45 pm.

Some former Marconi and Australian internationals will be competing in this traditional Cup Final.

Tony Henderson, arguably the best goal-scoring centre-back to have landed Australia, will be one of the competitors.

The towering blond Englishman, came to Australia in 1977 to play for the then called Canberra City in the newly formed NSL.

Henderson then moved on to captain Australia when Canberra sold him to Marconi.

Other former Marconi internationals, Dennis Colusso and Joe Rizzotto will also compete in tomorrow's Cottam Cup Final.

The Cottam Cup trophy was initially presented in 1907 to the NSW Association by Sir Harry Holdworth Rawson.

The Cup has always been played on a knock-out format and is open to all Amateur Senior teams.

The Granville Association in 1916 was the first Association to win the Cup for three consecutive years.

Tony Henderson: Former Australian captain to play in Cottam Cup Final tomorrow (Wednesday).

The Cup was named in memory of J.W. Cottam, killed in action in France on April 17th, 1917.

J.W. Cottam played for the Granville Magpies till he enlisted in the Armed forced in World War 1.

❑❑❑❑

THE MARCONI JUNIORS and Youth Presentation Night will be held on Saturday August 11th at 6 pm.

Ms Lisa Severin, Marconi's Co-ordinator of the Junior set up still has a few tickets left for this glamour evening.

Ms Severin may be contacted on 02-9823 2222 during office hours.

Ms Severin told us: "We will have squads attending from our Under 7s through to our Under 17s.

"We are expecting some 700 people to attend our Presentation Night," ended Ms Severin.

❑❑❑❑

Australians, Alex Duric and Brian Bothwell playing in Singapore for the Geylang United S-League club, have been scoring freely this season.

At the halfway mark of the S-League, Geyland United is sitting in second spot with Bothwell having scored 14 goals with Duric nailing the target with two more.

By John Economos

BANKSTOWN CITY CUBS Under 14s playing in the Super Youth League of NSW, is preparing a most enterprising crusade into Europe come September.

Bankstown City's youth convenor, stated to *ABSW*:

"This project of our can only be described as a chance of a lifetime.

"The members of our Under 14s will be heading off to Europe at the end of September.

"We have already arranged a series of matches against teams in Germany, Austria, Belgium as well as in Holland," stated Mr Kurtz.

"Our travelling squad of 16 players along with 10 parents and officials, will depart from Sydney on September 28th for just over two weeks.

"Already six matches have been confirmed and the travelling party will be visiting some of the best stadiums in Europe.

Ms Lisa Severin: Marconi's Convenor of the Juniors.

"This will be an experience that our young boys will never forget in a hurry," proudly ended Mr Kurtz.

The Bankstown City Cubs are coached by the knowledgeable Saso Boskovski.

For months the young lads of Bankstown, together with their parents, have most actively been locked into fund raisings and have planned an 'Auction Dinner Dance' on August 4th at the Monterey Function Centre in Bankstown.

Tickets to this special function are now on sale, ($50 each-inclusive of a special three course dinner, soft drinks, wines plus beer), and may be purchased by phoning 02-9796 1962.

❑❑❑❑

JEFF CAMPBELL, the Auckland Kingz' defender, has signed for Adelaide City.

The tenaciously talented 21 year old defender has represented New Zealand at Under 20 and Under 23 levels, plus has played in ten 'A' Internationals for his country.

Jeff Campbell: Adelaide City's coach.

Campbell's experience, despite his young age, is a most welcomed arrival at Adelaide City as head coach Zoran Matic again embarks on a rebuilding project.

Matic stated: "Jeff is a player capable of adding some 'steel' into our midfield."

❑❑❑❑

NAUM SEKULOVSKI, Wollongong Wolves' new off-season signing, already has shifted across to the South Coast of NSW.

Signed by coach Ronnie Corry from the Eastern Pride, the 19 year old attacking left midfielder-cum-linkman, already has dropped into a light, daily training routine.

Everyday young Naum, (pronounced 'Norm'), goes for lomng runs with his new captain, Stuart Young.

"I'm quite excited coming to Wollongong.

"Having won the last two NSL championships, Wollongong seems the place to be at," Sekulovski told *'Good Oil'*.

A student in 1997 at the V.I.S., the enthusiastic Sekulovski two years later was selected in the first squad of the Australian Under 17s.

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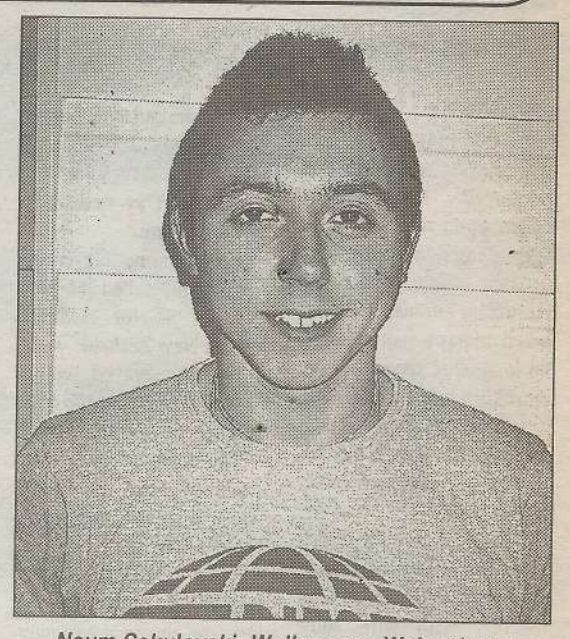


Naum Sekulovski: Wollongong Wolves' new signing.

Speaking of new signings at Wollongong Wolves, the Australian League champions have been further active in this department, but off-the-pitch as well.

Wollongong's Board Of Directors recently signed up the energetic Ms Chris Beaven, a former model in England, who has been installed into the position of Corporate Relations Manager'.

The highly energetic Ms Beaven stated to 'Good Oil': "We have some real exciting plans mapped out at Wollongong for the new season.

"Our marketing activities will be greatly stepped up and will involve our NSL players as much as possible.

"We have some real big names in the corporate sector that have already shown us strong interest for involvement with our Club," ended the vivacious Ms Beaven.

Ms Chris Beaven: Wollongong's new Corporate Relations Manager.

❑❑❑❑

SBS on Sunday August 12th at 10.30 pm-(a.e.s.t.), (10.00pm South Australia and Darwin, 8.30 pm Perth) will bring in the Live coverage of the Charity Shield between England giants, Liverpool and Manchester United direct from the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff.

Juan Sebastian Veron: Manchester United's new signing.

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

Special guest on the SBS panel will be Wollongong Wolves' new captain, Stuart Young.

Young, the League champions' ace marksman who has signed a new three year contract to remain with Wollongong, was born and raised in Hull, England.

Manchester United is expected to field its two new off-season signings, Juan Sebastian Veron and Ruud Van Nistelrooy.

❑❑❑❑

ANDY HARPER, Newcastle United's recently retired striker, has also recently parted company with SBS TV.

The always articulate and most studious Harper who was extensively used by SBS on its team in the last World Cup in France, has been snapped by the Nine Network.

Obviously a smart and early move on Nine's behalf as it gears up for the Nine Network's first and exclusive Live coverage of next year's Japan/Korea World Cup Finals.

❑❑❑❑

ITALIAN World Cup goalkeeper, Gianlugi Buffon spent two hours with the Brisbane Strikers' juniors, signing autographs and posing for hundreds of photographs.

Buffon was brought to Brisbane by Parmalat and spent a week holidaying in North Queensland before he returned to Italy.

Some 200 children attended the three day 'Parmalat Junior Coaching Clinic' Gigi was overwhelmed by the response he received and made sure he signed something for everyone ... parents included.

Club Secretary Ray Evans was also overwhemed, but more with the numbers who attended the clinic of a Club that had been kicked out of the next NSL season. "Not a bad turn up for a Club that supposedly doesn't exist," quipped Evans.

"The support the Club received in getting the Brisbane Strikers back into the NSL for next season was mind boggling.

"We didn't give up and were confident things would turn out right for our Club."

Soon after, Soccer Australia adivsed the Club in writing that it had ratified the re-entry of the Brisbane Strikers into the 2001-02 NSL.

❑❑❑❑

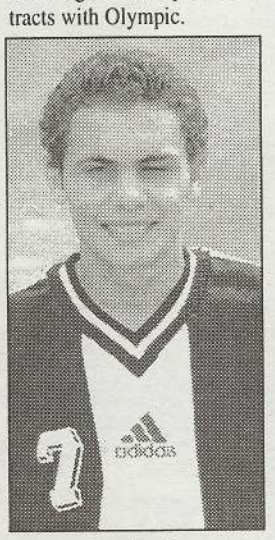
SYDNEY OLYMPIC late last week made two snap signings from John Kosmina's Brisbane Strikers' squad.

By John Economos

Last Wednesday Olympic signed up 19 year old Jade North whilst last Friday the Sydney side followed up with the signing of Wayne Shroj.

North and Shroj have played for Australia at both Under 17s level and for the Youth team in the recent World Championships in Argentina.

North as well as Shroj have signed two year contracts with Olympic.



Jade North: Signs for Sydney Olympic.

Argentina for the World Youth Championships.

He also was a member of the 1999 Australian Under 17s squad which made it to the Final in New Zealand, but unfortunately lost the Final to Brazil.

Prior to joining the Brisbane Strikers, Shroj graduated through the A.I.S. as well as the Q.A.S.

Wayne Shroj: Signs for Olympic.

Meanwhile in other news concerning Olympic, the SYDNEY Club which almost certainly looks like it will be moving its homeground for the new season from Belmore Sports Ground to Cronulla Rugby League's homeground, 'Shark Park', is also about to change the team's name to 'Olympic Sharks'.

❑❑❑❑

ANTE JURIC, Sydney Olympic's captain, returned to Australia last Sunday after two weeks of trialling with Norwegian club side, Molde.

Ante Juric: Back from Norway seeking a work-permit.

The lanky lateral defender had to return to apply for a work-permit to play in Norway.

"Molde have offered me a contract to play till the end of November on a loan deal. If I'm granted a work-permit I will be returning immediately to Norway.

"Molde does not use a sweeper and in games they have been using me as a defensive midfielder," juric told 'Good Oil' last night.

❑❑❑❑

TINY nation, Senegal, created sensational history last Sunday in Windhoek which rocked, (but pleased), the entire African continent.

The small Northern coastal fringed African country of Senegal, qualified for its first-ever World Cup Finals.

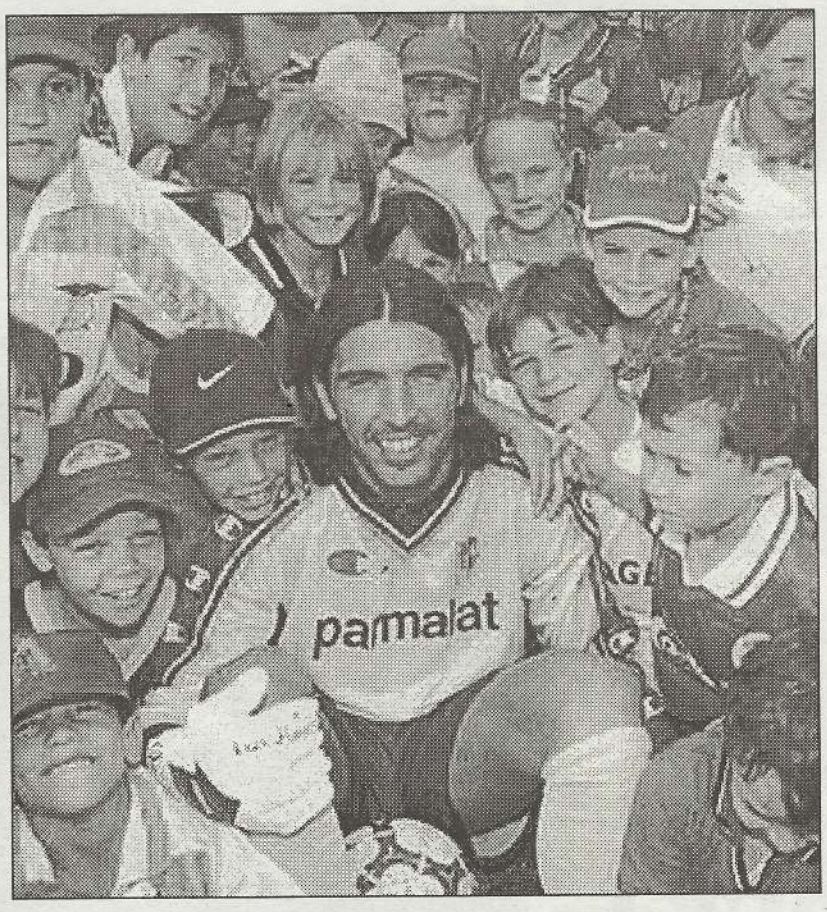
2002 FIFA WORLD CUP KOREA|JAPAN

By defeating the three times larger Namibia by 5-0 in Group C, Senegal was able to ever-so gently edge out Finals favourites, Morocco, from marching for the third consecutive time into World Cup Finals.

The young Senegalese 'soldiers', (average age 20), finished equal on Group points, (15), with hot favourites Morocco.

However with a slightly better goal-difference, Senegal not only has denied Morocco their third straight-up entry to Cup Finals, but have joined three fellow Africans, (the Cameroons, South Africa and Tunisia) who have also qualified for Japan/Korea 2002.

Andy Harper: Joins Channel Nine team.



Gianluigi Buffon AC Parma and Italy's World Cup goalkeeper, seen here crowded by a large group of delighted Brisbane Strikers' Juniors who attended the Parmalat Soccer Coaching Clinic.

❑❑❑❑

Shroj has played 20 times for the Australian Youth side and was in the recent squad that went to

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5. Under 16 Division 1 Youth League
6. Under 15 Division 1 Youth League
7. Under 14 Division 1 Youth League
8. Under 13 Division 1 Youth League
9. Under 12 Division 1 Cadet League
10. Under 11 Division 1 Cadet League

Applications for the above positions close on 10th August 2001. All applicants must hold a minimum Intermediate Licence and appropriate Coaching Council Accreditation for all Coaching positions.

Enquiries to the Secretary, Sue Hartas 9673 4939 or 0414 701 489

All Applicants must supply details of experience, qualifications and Personal References to:

THE SECRETARY
MT. PRITCHARD FEDERATION SOCCER CLUB
7 MARANIE AVE, ST MARYS NSW 2760

Australia's 1974 World Cup Mercedes Buses

By John Economos

WHEN Australia qualified for the World Cup Finals in West Germany back in 1974, not only were they grouped with some stylish nations such as hosts West Germany, East Germany and Chile, but also travelled in style.

As the Australian World Cup team arrived in Berlin, the players were astounded when they spotted this special bus gliding up to collect them.

It was a brand spanking new gleaming Mercedes Benz bus that had been brightly painted in Australia's national colours.

Captain Peter Wilson and his players couldn't believe their eyes.

But later when the Australian players arrived in Hamburg, another, yet identical Mercedes bus pulled up which was also fully decked out with the same national colours plus no less than three Australian flag 'wraps' painted across the coach's body panels.

"These buses were just sheer luxury to us," former Australian defender Dougie Utjesenovic stated to us.

John Warren, commented to ABSW: "Not only were these buses sheer luxury, but fully equipped with real state of the art.

"The Germans didn't do all this just for Australia though.

On of the Magnificent Mercedes Benz Buses that transported the Australian Squad, during the 1974 World Cup Finals in Hamburg, Berlin and Munich seen above is Australian team bus fully decked out in our National livery.

Johnnty Warren: Played 1974 World Cup finals.

"All 16 nations at the World Cup had Mercedes buses decked out in their respective national colours.

ROMA READY TO SPLASH $40M ON VIDUKA

Australian striker Mark Viduka is now being linked with Italian Serie A champions Roma for a reported $40million deal — and the Italians are willing to include another player as part of the deal.

The Italian giants are keen to pair Viduka alongside Argentine goal-machine, Gabriel Batistuta in a bid to reinforce their attacking options.

Despite Viduka's recent mouthwatering contract at Leeds as well as repeated announcements by Leeds chairman, Peter Risdale that Viduka was not for sale at any price, Roma are hellbent on luring the Australian to their Stadio Olympco base.

Gabriel Batistuta: Viduka is wanted as his strike partner.

The tall Aussie has recently signed a contract extension with Leeds, but Roma president Franco Sensi considers Viduka the ideal partner to Gabriel Batistuta.

Since the season break in Europe, Viduka has been severally-linked with moves to big-spending Spanish side, Real Madrid as well as Juventus.

Already, worried about all the speculation surrounding the big Aussie, Leeds are reportedly pursuing their interest in young English star, Kieron Dyer who they see as an ideal replacement for Viduka.

Leeds manager, David O'Leary has long been an admirer of Dyer and will spare no expense in bringing the gifted youngster to Elland Road.

Inspite of repeated statements from Leeds United that he is not for sale, Italian champions Roma are preparing a $40m offer to bring Aussie mark Viduka to the Serie A club.

As at press time on Monday, reports from British tabloids indicate that O'Leary is preparing to make a $28million bid for Dyer, who recently indicated to Newcastle United coach, Bobby Robson that he would love bigger challenges elsewhere.

According to colourful British tabloid, News of the World Newcastle boss Robson now faces a massive fight to hold onto the 22 year-old following failed bids for international stars Laurent Robert from French side, PSG and Barcelona winger, Boudewijn Zenden. Dyer is believed to be frustrated at Newcastle's inability to land a big international name and is seriously considering his future at St James' Park.

The Leeds offer involves $22 million up front, with a further $6 million depending on appearances for the club.

Meanwhile, Roma president, Sensi is believed to have contacted Leeds 'management with a view to preparing terms for an expected Roma bid in the coming months.

Vasilopoulos romps home in South polls

By Bert van Bedaf

South Melbourne members overwhelmingly voted for more of the old rather than opting for the new.

According to election scrutineers, members were set to return several existing directors of the board at the club's first and historic election in 13 years last Sunday.

The Protect South ticket, headed by long-time president George Vasilopoulos was trouncing its challenger, the New South group, by 14 to one to form a new 15-member board, early Monday morning reports indicated.

Only New South leader, Panos Margaritis, who was vice president to Vasilopoulos, appeared to have survived the members' massacre and will again be part of the (new) board.

Of the 2,500 South members about 800 voted. Booths opened at 9am and closed at 5pm. Counting began at 6pm and was expected to be completed by 8pm, but at 10pm the electoral committee told dismayed members a result would not be available until Monday morning, 3am.

By 8am, an unofficial result was only available from scrutineers. An official declaration was still forthcoming by noon. The South Melbourne office was closed on Monday.

"The indications are Protect South has won 14 to one, based on the scrutineers' report," board member Nick Maikousis and a member of the Protect South ticket, said.

Margaritis was unsure of the result. He also queried the appearance of 72 voters (about eight per cent of the total vote) who showed up on Sunday but were not on the members' electoral list. They carried life membership identification and were allowed to vote.

Their ballots were kept separate with their names noted on the paper, a New South member said on Sunday.

"There are about 72 votes, we don't know about. It's about eight per cent of the total vote. It might be the difference between us (and the other ticket). It could alter the situation," Margaritis said on Monday.

The Protect South ticket is likely to return Vasilopoulos as president.

It will also introduce former SBS television personality George Donikian to the board and re-introduce legendary player Jimmy Armstrong, who was a strong presence during the 1990s.

Returned board members apart from Vasiloupoulos, Maikousis and Margaritis are expected to be Protect South members Peter Mitrakis, Jim Karakoussis, Peter Skrepetis, Peter Kakalis, Mary Pirchan and Peter George.

Board members, who stood for the New South ticket, such as Andrew Dye, Leo Athanasakis, Peter Kartsidimas, Emmanuel Panourakis and Jeff Lambadaridis, will most likely lose their positions to newcomers.

The new board is expected to meet tonight (Tuesday) to elect office bearers. One of their first tasks will be appointing a coach. Former Olyroos coach Raul Blanco is a candidate, together with Carl Halford among others.

George Vasilopoulos (left) and Channel 10 newcaster, George Donikian at a pre-election meeting of the 'Protect Souths' faction of South Melbourne Soccer club.

REPORT TAKES SOUTH TO TASK

By Bert van Bedaf

The board that is going to lead South Melbourne next season, following the election outcome, will need to sharpen its act on several fronts, including player-management, sponsorship, financial management and members communications, according to a confidential report kept secret at South for several months.

According to extracts, obtained by ABSW, the South Melbourne board will need to become more transparent in structure and improve its "functional effectiveness".

Nick Maikousis: South Melbourne Vice-President and board member speaking at a forum organised prior to last weekend's elections.

Prepared by academic Dennis Hatcher seven months ago, the highly-sensitive report paints a picture of poor management and lack of accountability.

The Hatcher report was compiled over two months at the request of club president George Vasilopoulos, who is likely to stave off a strong challenge and return as president with his Protect South group.

The report says the board lacks "policies, goals and objectives". There appears to be "no strategic plan, goals and objectives with strategies as to how to achieve them; no agreed business plan to work to; no strategic direction and focus for the board to work to; no appraisal process for the determination of how the board and sub-committees are working".

It went on there was "a sense that the operational budget is not easily accessed".

"There appears to be a lack of direction and active input from many of the members of the board" and "the ongoing accountability of decisions made by the board appears to lack rigor". "Much of the work by the board appears to be reactionary rather than proactive."

"There is a lack of planning in key areas, such as marketing, sponsorship, membership, facilities, staff work performance and appraisal.

There is a lack of professional respect between the board and the administration. The current office environment is totally unsuitable for the staff to operate in an efficient and effective manner," the report stated.

The report offers several recommendations, including establishing "coterie clubs", introduction of "sponsorship and services for the club, cash and/or contra", "media and marketing opportunities" and "ability to attract new and high profile members to the board".

Hatcher also recommended the club should "establish a financial and budgetary process that is open to board members and the CEO (executive officer)".

"Budgets are to be developed for all key areas of the club, namely administration, marketing and sponsorship, football department, facilities, membership."

The report also recommended a far more transparent reporting structure with position descriptions formalised, minutes and agendas provided and planning procedures in place.

Vasilopoulos was shocked to learn details of the report had become available outside the club. "The Hatcher report details at an intimate level the structure and the running of our club. It provides a blueprint for our operations in the future," Vasilopoulos said.

Letters to the Editor

Patrick Rafter: Exemplary conduct on and off the field of play.

Marconi, South's plight are eye-openers

Dear Sir,

I was shocked to hear of the financial turmoil of Marconi from ABSW July 3, and more recently South Melbourne (ABSW July 17).

I can't believe that these two foundation clubs could be in such strife, especially seeing that South won the championship two seasons ago and played in the lucrative FIFA Club World Championships.

I think Australian soccer is in real trouble if our more established clubs are seeing red and something should be done about it.

For a start I think Soccer Australia needs to start putting more back into the NSL, as it is the foundation for our game.

All the money SA gets seems to go on qualifying for the World Cup, and 'Mickey Mouse' games against third string Colombian teams.

The real loser is the game in this country and I think SA should be more sensitive to this. Qualifying for the World Cup is NOT an overnight remedy for making this game the premier sporting fixture on the Australian calendar.

Much planning, better management, transparency and an overall commitment to professionalism are what is needed to rid the game from the pollution that has been choking it over the past twenty years. While the World Cup will certainly drum up support for the code and corporate interest, all this will come to nothing if the donkeys who currently control our game keep opening Swiss bank accounts.

More money should be spent on making the NSL a more attractive and lucrative competition. We need better marketing, better coverage, and positivity from the media who according to Mr Economos' Good Oil, aren't treated much better than the rest of us.

Players need a reason to stay in Australia. Youngsters need a reason to consider a career in soccer from a grassroots level.

Soccer is the most played game in Australia (next to netball) so these problems should never exist in a 'corruption free' environment.

It says something about the way the game is run that time and time again clubs are taking the burden of mismanagement and shoddy professionalism. The result of this unfortunately is reflected in the demise of the Carltons, Eastern Pride and now even some of our more established clubs.

I would like to challenge Soccer Australia into cleaning up this mess and making the round ball game our best supported, financially and socially.

Don't pass the buck and say it is the clubs fault as YOU should be responsible for ensuring the clubs have an environment to run efficiently and realistically in YOUR competition.

There is not enough money in the NSL at the moment and that is not the fault of the clubs, but your own.

Bertrand Williams
Adelaide, SA

Editor's Note: An excellent and very accurate evaluating letter.

Zelic, Kewell should emulate Rafter

Dear Sir,

Like most passionate Aussie sports fans I spent the whole three hours of the Rafter versus Ivanisevic Wimbledon Final, (penultimate Monday), on the edge of my seat.

This was truly a highly entertaining and skillfull dogfight and I felt neither opponent deserved to lose.

But of course someone did, and his name was Patrick Rafter.

Now I sincerely hope that Ned Zelic and Harry Kewell made the time to watch this remarkable game of tennis for there are a few important lessons that I believe they could learn, more so from the loser than the game itself.

Pat Rafter is far and above my favourite sportsperson, even though I am a far more passionate soccer supporter than tennis. Lets forget all the sentimental, patriotic hero-worshiping that is far too often spun in the press these days.

When Rafter lost that game he had the grace and dignity to congratulate his opponent and said that the crowd and fans were the real reason why these guys played, NOT THE MONEY.

Pat has always made himself available for the Australian Davis Cup team and enjoys an excellent record in this event.

Even when he has been INJURED, or it would've been AGAINST HIS PERSONAL PURSUIT FOR SUCCESS, Pat has ALWAYS placed his COUNTRY FIRST.

Did you guys on the other side of the world hear that? Well maybe I should repeat it again: PAT HAS ALWAYS PLACED HIS COUNTRY FIRST.

Despite being very wealthy due to his remarkable talent, Pat is not spoilt, not arrogant, very humble and most remarkably believes there is a lot more to life than just tennis.

He will never let anything get in the way from trying to compete for his country and is involved in a lot of charity work, giving back to the community.

Ned Zelic

Harry Kewell

Now there are players that consistently make themselves available for the Socceroos and play their hearts out for their country (eg. Mark Viduka, Paul Okon and Stan Lazaridis), but unfortunately there are other high profile players (above mentioned) that don't seem to care less.

To these people I have one thing to say, If you don't care to play for us, we don't care to have you play for us.

NO ONE PERSON IS ABOVE THE CAUSE FOR THEIR COUNTRY. And I think one athlete has proven this more than most others.

Pat Rafter, I salute you.

T. Baxter
Gold Coast, QLD.

SA's childish power struggles

Dear Sir,

I cannot understand all this ridiculous politicking that is ruining our game.

Which idiots voted a Chairman into power with a hostile board? This is ludicrous and unfortunately the game can not possibly go forward.

Tony Labbozetta, if voted in fairly, deserves a fair go and the support of his board so change and progress can begin to take place.

At the moment the game is in stalemate with a 12-team competition one day, a 14-team competition the next. Where else in the world would this happen?

If everybody doesn't believe Tony should have gotten job and nobody wants him there, as appears to be the case when his name is mentioned at games, then he should be removed, for the good of the game.

But, if he does have some support then please ensure he has the right framework to make the game go forward.

The public is sick to death of hearing about these pathetic and extremely childish power struggles.

All of you grow up!!

S. Presti,
Modella, VIC.

WANTED: A SOCCER SUPER-12

Dear Sir,

Recently I wrote suggesting that Soccer needs to look at a Super 12 or 14-team Competition with our Asian neighbours, similar to what Rugby Union has in the Southern Hemisphere, because we keep losing our best players to overseas clubs.

For it to work properly without favouritism to any country, both the Oceania and Asian Confederation chairmen need to be joint partners in such a radical new competition with one board member from each country involved.

A maximum of three entries (teams) from each country would be allowed out of the 12 or 14 teams involved. If Japan and Korean cities are also involved or invited, then perhaps a second division of 12 or 14 can be organised with promotion and relegation if it's financially-feasible.

With only three maximum teams from any country it guarantees that no country will dominate the Comp if 12 or 14 teams are involved.

The problem is that both Adelaide and Brisbane will miss out, unless a second division is possible with only two more teams allowed from any one country to make it a maximum of five over two divisions of 28 teams.

Of course the alternative is the same tired old NSL formula which benefits mainly the European clubs only. A 12, 14, 16 or whatever number NSL Competition will never stop being a feeder comp to the European clubs no matter how much money comes into the game from sponsors, TV rights etc. The opposition codes won't disappear or collapse into oblivion after being around for 100 years or more.

The best we can hope for is to draw level in popularity with the other codes. That will mean that players will earn more than now, but will still be well-short of what the top Europe players earn.

In fact, the Viduka's, Okon's, Bosnich's, Kewell's and other Aussies earn more in little over a month, than the very top AFL and NRL players earn in a full year.

The point is that because there is no salary caps in World Soccer, the richest soccer club's in Europe will always be able to take away our best players whenever they want to, no matter what salaries they earn here.

So if we want to slowly break away from being just a feeder country for the European club's in future, we need to seriously look at a Super 12, 14 or 16 concept with our Asian neighbours, so not just Australia but all of East Asia and Oceania will benefit long term.

So how about it Basil? there is no harm in trying, even though it would be Herculean task to operate and organise such a competition with so many nations and cultures, many who are envious of our standard of living, Malaysia's Prime Minister in particular.

Dominic Scullino,
Nerang, QLD.

SENEGALESE THANK ABSW

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the story on my country, Senegal, about its recent success in the world cup qualifiers. There are about 50 people from Senegal living in Australia and to read anything about our country regarding soccer is fantastic.

I was very involved on behalf on the Senegal team at the recent Olympic games.

The whole Senegalese delegation was invited to my place along with the minister of sports..

My son Ali plays in the winter premier league in the New South Wales soccer federation for Parramatta Eagles under 19 and then was invited to go to Singapore and was later signed with Gombak United in the S-league starting in the first grade.

We interestingly later learnt that Ali was the youngest foreign player ever to play in a Singapore first division league team.

On behalf of my people in Australia thank you again for the coverage in ABSW....

Omar Ndiaye
Bankstown, NSW

OFF THE CROSSBAR

By Allan Crisp

ROCKY'S LAST ROUND

Rocky Aloisi, head of one of Australia's most famous soccer families, is no longer coach of Premier League club Raiders.

A day after Raiders lost its round 16 game to Olympic FC 3-0, Aloisi was told by Raiders chairman Zlatko Matulic the club committee had decided to terminate his contract.As is generally the case when a club parts company with its coach, it was said that the parting was amicable.

The difference this time was that the announcement was fact, not fiction as both the coach and his chairman issued statements that the termination was best for the future of the club.

Aloisi said he would have preferred to stay in the job until the final six rounds were decided, but he bowed to the committee decision.

When Aloisi departed, Raiders were eighth on the 12-team championship ladder with five wins, five losses and six draws and still holding a mathematical chance of qualifying for the final five play-offs.

"I wasn't getting the right response from the players," said Aloisi, as he confessed he might have been guilty of fielding too many young players in the first team.

"I think it's well known that I couldn't get the best out of some players and that the results weren't there. "That's very unfair to the club and the supporters, so I thought the best thing was to leave."

Aloisi admitted to being disappointed that the current squad was vastly different to the previous season and that the committee had not allowed for the youth and inexperience of many of his charges.

"Unfortunately in soccer those sorts of factors are not taken into account, but at the same time, I can understand the frustration of the supporters at our lack of success.

"One of the problems could well have been that some of the senior players resented me bringing in so many of the younger players and it's been a somewhat unhappy camp because of that.

"I recall when I brought in Ivan Karlovic as sweeper that there were some players who thought he was too young to be a sweeper.

"Somehow or other I couldn't get the two parties (seniors and youngsters) together and that was part of the problem.

"I could only do what I thought was right for the team, but not everyone saw it that way. "There was a lot of pressure on me as well as on the chairman and the team manager. We decided that it was best that I stood aside.

"There was no ill feeling. I have the greatest respect for the chairman, who is a thorough gentleman.In the end, we just shook hands and I know we will remain good friends," Aloisi said.

Matulic agreed that Aloisi had achieved much during his three seasons with the club.

"It was a difficult decision to make, but the committee came to the conclusion that it was for the benefit of the club," Matulic said.

"Rocky lifted the profile of the club and no doubt his faith in developing young players has been among the many good things he has done at the club.

"In this case, though we had to look at the immediate task of saving our season," Matulic said.

It is expected that former Blue Eagles defender Carmen Lauriello, who was senior assistant to Aloisi, and Raiders Under 23 squad coach Michael Petrillo, will be appointed to coach the senior side for the remainder of the season.Aloisi, father of Socceroos Ross and John Aloisi, recommended Ivan Karlovic and his younger brother Mario to Adelaide City Force coach Zoran Matic, who signed both aspiring champions.

John Aloisi, whose father lost his job at SA Premier League side, Raiders, last week.

ROCKY'S ROOKIES

Apart from the Karlovic brothers, Rocky Aloisi granted senior Premier League status to outstanding teenagers Stanko Zilic, Justin Bralic, Mimi Saric and Dalibor Barisic.

Mindful that his sons Ross and John Aloisi also were blooded during their teens, Aloisi is seldom backward in giving youth its chance.

His assessment of the boys he fielded in the Raiders first team this season is unreserved and unstinting in its praise." Just remember those names because they will not only make it at NSL level, but they are capable of going beyond that level," Aloisi predicted.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

New Adelaide City Force and New Zealand international midfielder Jeff Campbell is following in the boot studs of his father Clive, who led the way for his talented son.

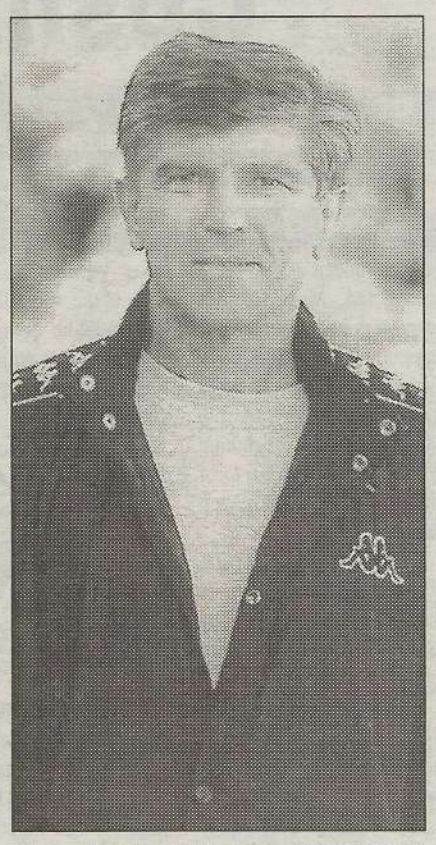
With 10 full international appearances to his credit, Jeff has some ground to make up because his dad has played 27 times for NZ and boasts a goal tally of six.

Campbell senior played a key part in the All Whites World Cup qualification when he turned out for the vital 3-3 draw with Australia that carried the Kiwis all the way to Spain.

Despite that success, Clive Campbell missed selection in the final NZ squad which included former Adelaide City defender Glenn Dods.

QUICK SWITCH

Adelaide City's Premier League team has been sharing Campbelltown City's Newton Sports Field Complex facilities this season, but with the latter's refurbishment program behind schedule, the Zebras will complete their home fixtures at alternate venues.



Zoran Matic: On the verge of recruiting more players for Adelaide City Force.

Adelaide City will play White City next Saturday (August 5) at The Paddocks, Bridge Road Para Hills and will use the same venue for the clash with Campbelltown Red Devils on Saturday August 18.

City's final home match against Blue Eagles will be decided at Modbury Jets home turf at Golden Grove Reserve on Saturday, August 25.

DECISION TIME

Adelaide City Force coach Zoran Matic is looking to bolster his squad by signing two more players to join Jeff Campbell as his recruits for next season.

Matic is faced with the perplexing task of deciding between two hand picked NSL players from interstate or two Europeans, who have been recommended to the club.

His immediate preference is to sign the NSL men whose qualities are well known to him.

That would not be the case should one or both of the Europeans become the major targets.

"If we signed one of the Europeans we would insist on a six-week trial," Matic said.

LIFE BEGINS

Tony Cocetta is arguably the most dedicated, faithful and loyal supporter ever to yell his lungs out for the Adelaide City Force.

Cocetta has followed the fortunes of his beloved Black and Whites since they first burst through the NSL streamers back in 1977.

Shortly, the avid fan will hit the magical big 40 target and his party guest list will include many others of the City faithful.And those who are unbelievers can expect to be ear-bashed to the point of conversion during the birthday bash.

Allan Crisp can be heard on the 5RPH (1197AM) Marshall Thompson Homes/Pacific Real Estate Breakfast Soccer Show each Tuesday from 7am-8.30am, along with Croydon Kings coach Phil Scardigno, Peter Millar, The Advertiser soccer writer Meno Toutsidis and producer Robbie Popplestone.

Former Australian international John Perin, Crisp and Millar gather for the 5RPH SOS (Soccer On Sunday) program each Sabbath from 8.30am-9.30am to present the latest local, interstate and overseas information and interviews.

Defeat takes shine off Melita's Gothia Cup run

The Parramatta Melita Eagles/Manchester United U/17s lost their second round game in the 2001 Gothia Cup, going down 1-0 to CD Benfica de Alverca late last week.

In their previous games the Eagles had recorded a resounding 5-0 win against Swedish side, BoIF to follow on from their victories against Pol. Kennedy Giliberti, Askims IK and a draw with Samba Soccer Club earlier last week.

The Parramatta Melita Eagles/Manchester United U-17s have topped their group in the preliminary round. In their three group games, the Eagles won two and drawn one, namely: 1-0 over Italian side, Pol. Kennedy Giliberti; 2-0 over Askims IK; while drawing 0-0 with Samba Soccer Club.

Following hot on the heels of their title-winning success in the recent Italian Cup, the Eagles warmed up for the Gothia Cup by thrashing a French U/17 team 6-0 and then recorded a 1-0 victory against Giliberti in their first game of the Gothia Cup.

The Melita officials rearranged the NSW Super Youth League fixtures for the under-17 side, in order for them to compete in both the Italian and Gothia Cups. Club President, Doris Drewery, commented: "We tried to organise the trip last year but for one reason or another it did not eventuate.

However, this year, there was a concerted fundraising effort by the players and parents and the boys are making the most of their opportunity."

With the entourage jetting back into Sydney this week, there will little time for rest as the Eagles prepare for their Super Youth League under-17 finals campaign.

In other youth football news from New South Wales, the Leichhardt Tigers have been accepted into the prestigious 2002 Viareggio soccer tournament.

The Lambert Park club will send their NSW Premier League Under-19 squad to Italy next February.

South Australia Premier League Results

ROUND 17

PREMIER LEAGUE

Blue Eagles (Brooks)	1	Raiders (Nicholls, Karapetis)	2
Adelaide City	0	Metro Stars (Schimizzi, D'Arsie)	2
Modbury Jets	0	White City Woodville	0
Port Lion	0	Campbelltown (Caperna)	1
Olympic FC (Harley)	1	Croydon Kings (Piotrowski)	1
Port Pirie Spirit (Locke 2)	2	Playford Patriots	0

STATE LEAGUE

Noarlunga Bulldogs (Chesterman 2)	2	Panthers	0
Western Strikers (Perrotta 2, Pappas)	3	Northern Demons (Salvemini 2, Stamatopoulos, tog)	4
Salisbury Apaches (Robson, Deeley, Groth)	3	Seaford Surfers	0
Cobras (Lopes)	1	Hills Hawks (tog)	1
Birkalla (Teskinis 2)	2	Cumberland Foxes (Stuart, Paterson)	2
Enfield Falcons	0	Para Hills Knights (Lorenzo, Breton, Kelly)	3

ROUND 18

PREMIER LEAGUE

SATURDAY, JULY 28

Croydon Kings v Blue Eagles
Raiders v Port Lion Pirates
Campbelltown v Modbury Jets
White City Woodville v Metro Stars
Playford Patriots v Olympic FC
Port Pirie Spirit v Adelaide City

STATE LEAGUE

SATURDAY, JULY 28

Panthers v Birkalla
Cumberland Foxes v Cobras
Hills Hawks v Salisbury Apaches
Seaford Surfers v Northern Demons
Para Hills Knights v Noarlunga Bulldogs
Enfield Falcons v Western Strikers

Milan, Moulis exits leave Cosmos in disarray

Danny Moulis: Resigned surprisingly from Cosmos for lucrative international job.

By Graham Cooke

Canberra Cosmos ended another chaotic week with the announcement by chairman Danny Moulis that he was quitting because of a new work appointment that will see him spend much of his time outside Australia — just days after coach Mike Milovanocic walked out of the club.

Canberra Cosmos' plans for a smooth build-up to the National Soccer League season were earlier thrown into disarray as talks collapsed between the club and coach Milovanovic.

By the end of the week Milovanovic was heading back to his former job as coach of the ACT Academy of Sport and Cosmos officials were still casting around for a replacement.

Original plans to begin pre-season training last Wednesday were abandoned, as directors formed a sub-committee to draw up a short list of candidates.

By Friday, Moulis dealt the club a body blow by also announcing his exit. A lawyer with the Canberra firm of Freehills, he has been appointed to the disputes settlement panel of the World Trade Organisation.

With China just entering the WTO, he is expected to be shuttling between the organisation's headquarters in Geneva, and Beijing.

He stressed it was the pressures of this additional work, not anything to do with the Cosmos itself, which had prompted him to stand down. He specifically denied any link between his departure and the failure of the board to reach an agreement for next season with coach Mike Milovanovic.

The breakdown in negotiations with Milovanovic were as sudden as they were unexpected. Most Cosmos supporters had assumed the reappointment would be a formality after he had taken charge in succession to Tom Sermanni at the beginning of the year, winning five of the club's remaining ten games.

It is understood that Milovanovic and chairman Danny Moulis thought they had a deal, but the full board refused to endorse it.

The local media reported a Cosmos insider as saying the club was looking for a 'world-class coach', the problem being that world-class coaches usually command world-class salaries and the Cosmos do not have a world-class bank account.

Rumours continued to fly last week: Former Australian Institute of Sport head coach Ron Smith, now working overseas, was one name mentioned, but it would probably take more than the Cosmos could offer to tempt him back to Canberra; Jeff Hopkins, the last team boss of the stricken Eastern Pride, is a better bet — he would certainly be well acquainted with coaching in adversity.

The Cosmos could save money by looking at local coaches. Of the current crop, Monaro team boss Steve Bryant has had experience in charge of an NSL side, if somewhat briefly in a caretaker position at Canberra City in the mid-1980s.

Gungahlin Juventus' Ian Heywood can point to an impressive record at local level, having lost just three of his last 43 games.

He has been with the Cosmos before as Mike Lyons' assistant in the first couple of seasons, and with 16 years of coaching behind him says that he has more than enough experience for the job — but neither has been approached, and indications are the Cosmos will not consider a candidate from this area.

Towards the end of the week a name surfaced out of left field when a former World Cup player for Uruguay, Antonio Alzamedi, was reported to be one of the favourites for the job.

The link may well have been established through Cosmos player Milton Cortes, who is also from that country. Beyond this slender connection almost nothing is known of him.

While Alzamedi may well have the right coaching pedigree, the Cosmos would be making a formidable gamble in appointing an outsider with limited knowledge of the Australian scene who would have to put together a competitive squad, starting almost from scratch, in 10 weeks.

The fact remains that just two weeks after winning the battle to remain in the NSL, the Cosmos are without a chairman and coach, have just two players under contract, and have had to delay the beginning of pre-season training.

There was another departure from the club on Friday, with board member Peter Nichols resigning after his employer relocated him to Greece.

In the meantime, deputy chairman Chris Dillon becomes acting chairman until a permanent appointment can be made.

Mike Milovanovic: His resignation may have influenced Moulis's action.

NEW BOSS, DILLON, SPEAKS

The Cosmos board immediately confirmed deputy chairman Chris Dillon to act in the role of chairman following the resignation of Danny Moulis, last week.

Dillon who only became a director of the club in May 2001, however boasts a long association with the club as well as soccer in Canberra and promised to keep the club firmly on track in the new season.

"I am committed to ensuring that the club continues to meet its objectives in its preparations for the upcoming season," Dillon said.

"Having been successful in achieving a place in next season's NSL we remain 100% focused on carrying that success into next season.

I am pleased that Danny, whose contribution to soccer in this community cannot be underestimated, will maintain his links with the club by offering to assist the club in an advisory capacity."

"I believe I speak for not only the club but its shareholders, supporters and sponsors when I voice my very sincere appreciation for the significant role Danny has played over the past 12 months," Dillon said.

"He represented this club with pride and honour, overcoming many obstacles, to earn the respect of the Canberra community."

The resignation of Moulis as well as director Peter Nichols left two positions to be filled on the Cosmos board. The positon of chairman will be permanently-filled after the appointment of two new directors by Cosmos' major shareholder Soccer Canberra as soon as possible.

Playford to play in Manchester

By Allan Crisp

Playford Patriots league leading Under 17 squad has flown off to the Old Dart to participate in the Manchester International Football Festival.

The prestigious event caters for 400 teams from 20 nations including Europe, Africa, the US and Australia.

Groups ranging from Under 12's to seniors will play, with the Elizabeth-based South Australian team contesting the Under 16 division.

Patriots managing director Fiona Varacalli said the club wanted the team to participate in the tournament before they progress to open ranks.

Meanwhile, Playford's Under 14 squad has been invited to contest the Gold Coast Champion's Cup in Queensland in September.

Kanga Cup Results

BOYS

UNDER 11: SEMI-FINALS: Gunners (NSW) 2 Canberra Deakin 1. Belnorth United 4 Killarney District (NSW) 3. **FINAL:** Belnorth United 2 Gunners 1.

UNDER 12: SEMI-FINALS: Albion Park (NSW) 2 Sunshine Coast 1, Belnorth Gold 4 Woden Valley 1. **FINAL:** Belnorth Gold 5 Albion Park 0.

UNDER 13: SEMI-FINALS: Weston White 1 Tuggeranong United 0, Woden Valley 2 Majura 1. **FINAL:** Woden Valley 1 Weston White 0.

UNDER 14: SEMI-FINALS: Spirit FC (NSW) 3 St George Police Youth (NSW) 0, North Shore United (NZ) 1 East Timor 1 (North Shore won on penalties 3-2). **FINAL,** Spirit FC 1 North Shore United 0.

UNDER 15: SEMI-FINALS: Adelaide City 2 Survivors (NSW) 1, Griffith (NSW) 1 North Shore United (NZ) 0. **FINAL:** Adelaide City 0 Griffith 0 (Adelaide won 4-2 on penalties).

UNDER 17: Brianxa Calcio (Italy) 0 Sydney Grammar 0 (Sydney won 9-8 on penalties). NSW Country B 1 Avoca Sharks (NSW) 0. **FINAL:** NSW Country B 3 Sydney Grammar 3.

UNDER 24: Cooma 1 Royals (US) 0, Valley Youth (ACT) 2 Cassadella (ACT) 1. **FINAL:** Cooma 2 Valley Youth 0.

GIRLS

UNDER 12: FINAL: Coffs Coast (NSW) 2 Playground Legends (US) 1.

UNDER 14: SEMI FINALS: Coffs Coast (NSW) 1 Adelaide City 0, New York Dragons 2 Soccer Canberra Under 12 and 13 0. **FINAL:** New York Dragons 3 Coffs Coast 0.

UNDER 16: SEMI FINALS: New England (NSW) 10 Belwest Smashers 0, NSW Country 2 Soccer Canberra Under 14 0. **FINAL:** NSW Country 1 New England 0.

UNDER 19: SEMI FINALS: St Josephs (NSW) 2 ACT Youth 1, Dahan Institute of Technology (Taiwan) 2 NSW Country 1. **FINAL:** Dahan Institute of Technology 8 St Josephs 0.

JOEYS' WALDON LEADS ACT SCHOOLS' SIDE

The Schoolboys and Schoolgirls teams for 2001 to represent the ACT at the forthcoming National Schools Championships to be held in August at Gosford, NSW have been unveiled. National U/17 invitee, Ian Waldon is the most-prominent name the boys' team.

The ACT Boys squad includes eight players who were in the squad that finished third (behind NSW & VIC) in 2000 in the Nationals in Darwin, including Australian Schoolboy reps in 2000 – Matt Anstey and Danny Agnello. Anstey was a member of the Australian Schoolboys team that won the International Schools Cup held in Canberra last January. Agnello toured New Caledonia and Vanuatu with the Australian Schools 'A' team. Others backing up from 2000 are defenders Karl Varley and Adam Morgan, midfielders Steve Arnott, Robbie Cattanach and Matthew Menser.

Ian Waldon, who is bound for the Joeys camp this week at the AIS, and Anstey have just returned from a tour of Queensland with the AIS. They will be joined in the team by three other AIS players: Arnott, defender Wayne Heath from the Queensland Academy of Sport and Alex Brosque from the Marconi in Sydney.

The two goalkeepers are both from the Gunghalin Juventus club : Nathan Denham, who is also at the ACT Academy of Sport, and Benoit David.

Two players from Tuggeranong United both new to the team are Sam Hughes and Ruben Aras – Aras spent some time at the AIS during last year.

Tom Hitchen from Belconnen United will team up front with Brosque and another newcomer to the squad, Vlatko Tomeski from Queanbeyan United.

The coach is Ian Shaw who has coached many of these boys in other representative teams and remains the only ACT coach to have won a National Talent Identification Championship when his ACT U/15 team finished first in 1999.

The remaining officials are experienced representative officials: Richard Beazley (Assistant Coach/Physio) and Chris Conti (Manager).

ACT SCHOOLS SQUAD

BOYS' FINAL SQUAD

PLAYER	SCHOOL	CLUB
Danny Agnello	Daramalan College	ACTAS
Matthew Anstey	Erindale College	AIS/ACTAS
Ruben Aras	Mackillop College	Tuggeranong Utd
Steve Arnot	Marist College	AIS/ACTAS
Alex Brosque	Lake Ginninderra College	AIS/Marconi
Robbie Cattananch	Lake Ginninderra College	ACTAS/ Gunghalin Juventus
Benoit David	Narrabundah College	Gunghalin Juventus
Nathan Denham	Dickson College	ACTAS/ Gunghalin Juventus
Wayne Heath	Lake Ginninderra College	AIS/QAS
Tom Hitchen	Lake Ginninderra College	Belconnen Utd
Sam Hughes	Erindale College	Tuggeranong Utd
Matthew Menser	Erindale College	ACTAS/Tuggeranong Utd
Adam Morgan	Erindale College	Gunghalin Juventus
Vlatko Tomeski	Canberra College	Queanbeyan City
Karl Varley	Marist College	Weston Creek
Ian Waldon	Marist College	AIS/ACTAS

COACH – Ian Shaw
ASSISTANT COACH/PHYSIO – Richard Beazley
MANAGER – Chris Conti – Kambah High School

GIRLS' FINAL SQUAD

NO	NAMES	SCHOOL
1	Abby Porter	Erindale College
2	Erin Crawford	Lake Tuggeranong College
3	Heather Smith	Dickson College
4	Kate Barkley	Trinity Christian School
5	Robyn Hume	Trinity Christian School
6	Carmen Wood	Melrose High School
7	Emma Renkema	Erindale College
8	Amelia Conti	Erindale College
9	Kim Crocker	Lake Ginninderra College
10	Maja Veljanovska	Erindale College
11	Angela Freeman	Radford College
12	Susan Anderson	Melrose High School
13	Michelle Ainsworth	Erindale College
14	Josie Lehoczky	Trinity Christian School
15	Jessica Pagett	Orana School
16	Nicole Harding	Melrose High School

COACH – Ian Johnson – Melrose High School
MANAGER – Victoria D'Alton – Merici College

Bill Turner Cup

ROUND 3

Brisbane Grammar	4	Wavell	0
Kingaroy	3	Dalby	0
St Laurence	1	Brisbane State	0
Brisbane Boys College	5	Kelvin Grove	0
Beaudesert	4	St Francis	0
Trinity College	2	Rivermount	1
Helensvale	5	Southport School	1

ROUND 4

Cairns State	1	St Marys Cairns	0
Kirwan	2	Amlico	1
Holy Spirit Mackay	5	Mackay State	0
Kawana Waters	1	Coolum	0
Nudgee College	4	Narangba Valley	1
Corinda	4	Redbank Plains	1
Trinity Catholic	3	Beaudesert	1
Palm Beach Currumbin	2	Helensvale	1

CANBERRA OLYMPIC START MINI-REVIVAL

By Graham Cooke

After a grim half-season dogged by inconsistency and inexplicable lapses of form from their star players, it all seems to be coming right for Canberra Olympic.

The previous week they pulled a 3-3 draw with league leaders Canberra Deakin, followed on Sunday with a comprehensive 6-1 demolition of one of their main rivals for a place in the finals, Capital City Suns.

And for the second week in a row, a hattrick from the man who had previously been thankful of a goal every other game - Danny Macor.

Macor's return to goal-scoring form is undoubtedly a relief for the increasingly anxious Olympic fans, but the roots of this revival go beyond that to the decision by coach Baz Giampaolo, to play a role on the field once again.

Of course Giampaolo is not the force that once-devastated defences in the NSL and NSW League. At 42 that would be expecting too much, but on Sunday he did enough for 65 minutes to take some of the weight of attention from Macor, creating the extra space which was all the striker needed.

Just as he laid on the opportunities for Walter Valeri at Canberra City and later Marko Perinovic at Monaro, so Giampaolo is now breathing fresh life into another forward line more than a decade later.

The first goal was his doing – a push in the back, whether out of foolishness or exasperation, was enough to send him sprawling in the penalty area and Macor scored from the spot.

The second saw the Suns defence giving Macor far too much space as he ran through to score, then Ellie Salloum made it 3-0 at half time after good approach work from Robbie Grande.

The Suns made a determined attempt to claw their way back into the game after the interval, but their only reward was a penalty converted by Dion Cannel after Simon Evans had been brought down. Olympic waited their opportunity and struck decisively in the last 10 minutes, Macor completing his hat-trick, goalkeeper Angelo Konstantinou getting on the score sheet with the third penalty of the game, and defender David Palywoda finishing matters with a goal in stoppage time.

It might seem strange to praise the goalkeeper on the wrong end of such a score, but without Mick Kirkham the Suns could easily have been contemplating a double-figure beating. He made a string of outstanding saves, including one from Giampaolo at point blank range that had even the Olympic supporters applauding.

Giampaolo admitted he was surprised at the ease of the win. "I thought they would put it to us more than that," he said. "The team has been working very hard after I told each and every one of them to take a good hard look at themselves. The intensity has increased.

"I really haven't thought about how long I can keep going – while the legs hold out and I can make a significant contribution to the team, I'll still consider myself."

Suns' coach Bill Dojcinoski had little comment. "I think this sums it up," he said, waving his arm at a silent dressing room. "They are embarrassed and so am I."

Marko Perinovic: Helped Canberra Deakin to victory over Tuggeranong.

Gungahlin Juventus maintained their one-point lead at the top of the Premiership with a 3-0 win over a Belconnen United side that had been without a game on the two previous weekends. After a goalless and physical first half in which striker George Cattanach was carried off, Juventus wrapped up the game with goals from Matt Valeri (2) and Martin Lazzari.

Right behind them are Canberra Deakin who had a surprisingly difficult 3-1 win over lowly Tuggeranong United. Deakin's scorers were new Chilean import Marcel Munoz, Tony Lemezina and Marko Perinovic.

That result was sufficient to send Tuggeranong back to the basement after the University of Canberra beat Weston Creek Royals 3-1 with goals from Damien Ruitenberg, Michael Percival and Todd Donaldson.

ACT PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Gungahlin Juventus	11	9	0	2	40	10	27
Canberra Deakin	10	8	2	0	33	8	26
Capital City Suns	11	6	0	5	26	23	18
Canberra Olympic	10	5	2	3	28	16	17
Belconnen United	10	5	0	5	20	16	15
Monaro	10	5	0	5	17	20	15
University of Canberra	9	2	1	6	12	28	7
Weston Creek Royals	11	2	0	9	12	47	6
Tuggeranong United	10	1	1	8	12	31	4

Vas off to China - bound Kingz

By Bert van Bedaf

Vas Kalogeracos has become the third South Melbourne player to follow coach Mike Petersen to the Football Kingz.

The striker, ironically sparingly used by Petersen, trails Andy Vlahos and Con Boutsianis to Auckland, where the Kingz start training on August 1 for their third NSL sason.

The New Zealanders will tour China on September 10 for a series of pre-season matches. "It is something that's come our way and we're going to make the most of it," Petersen said.

Kalogeracos struggled to claim a regular striker's spot, scoring six goals. Again he'll be up against the pair of Boutsianis and Vlahos, who top-scored for South last season, netting 27 goals between them.

In a joint statement, the two forwards told the New Zealand press.

"We've seen the potential of this club and it is an exciting time to be involved. People will come to see good football from this team for the future. We're looking forward to it."

Kalogeracos joined South from Perth Glory and was originally from Victorian club Heidelberg United. He's played more than a 100 NSL matches and also had stints with English clubs Birmingham City and Stockport.

"He's a striker who has plenty of pace. Vas will be a valuable addition to our squad," Football Kingz general manager Chris Turner said.

Kalogeracos believes the Kingz will feature among the top NSL teams next season. "I am looking forward to playing under Mickey Petersen again in what will be a competitive team," Kalogeracos said.

Others to join Petersen in Auckland are trainer Darren Welch and team manager Andy Theoklitos.

Meanwhile, Simon Colosimo has finally touched base at Manchester City.

The South Melbourne defender/midfielder managed to sort out his work permit doubts and joined the English first division club last week.

His manager and South consultant George Christopoulos, who is also a licenced FIFA agent, confirmed the move.

"There was a hick-up with his work permit, but that has been resolved.

He has signed with Manchester City and has been training with the club. He will be playing for Manchester City," Christopoulos said.

South is keen to retain veteran defender Mehmet Durakovic, who is out of contract.

"He is holidaying at the moment, but he'll be the first player we want to have a chat with," Christopoulos said.

South Melbourne's only signing has been former Perth Glory striker Peter Buljan. The club's focus will be on youth development.

"We don't see any value in signing (any more) 30-year-old players," Christopoulos said.

The club will also need to resolve the coaching position as soon as members have elected a new board, which in turn elects the club's office bearers, including the president's position.

So far, captain Paul Trimboli has indicated he is not (yet) interested in stepping into the coaching role.

Vas Kalogeracos: South Melbourne's latest player to defect to Football Kingz.

SOCCER WOMAN BY JANENE MAR

MAIDEN YOUNG MATILDAS UNVEILED

The first Young Matildas (National Youth Team) selections along the road towards next year's inaugural FIFA Women's World Youth Championship were announced last Friday.

Recently-appointed National Youth Coach Mike Mulvey has selected nineteen players to contest the upcoming international tournament against the senior National Teams of Singapore and Vietnam, plus the NSW Institute of Sport. The tournament will be held 5-11 August in Gosford, concurrently with the Australian Secondary Schools Soccer Championships.

Illustrating the competitiveness amongst our emerging young talent, most of this team is younger than the 1983 cutoff date of elibility for the Under 19 World Championship. All of the field players have some national league experience under their belt and are scholarship athletes of their state's National Training Centre program. Stacey Stocco and Amber Neilson have been strutting their stuff in national league ranks since they were thirteen.

YOUNG MATILDAS SQUAD FOR GOSFORD

Harmonie ATTWILL	(Defender)
Zoe BETTERIDGE	(Goalkeeper)
Elissia CANHAM	(Midfielder)
Catherine CANNULI	(Forward)
Kathryn COLLINS	(Midfielder)
Rose DUNNE	(Striker)
Lana HARCH	(Striker)
Chichi MAY	(Defender)
Collette McCALLUM	(Midfielder)
Justine McLAUGHLIN	(Striker)
Kate McSHEA	(Defender)
Caitlin MUNOZ	(Midfielder)
Amber NEILSON	(Midfielder)
Nikki PICHON	(Goalkeeper)
Karla REUTER	(Midfielder)
Caroline SAVILLE	(Defender)
Thea SLATYER	(Defender)
Stacey STOCCO	(Midfielder)

Leading the troop is Matildas defender and Olympian Kate McShea who already has the experience of twelve senior full international caps to her name, including a starting eleven place in all three matches at Sydney 2000. Stocco, Neilson, Emma Davison, and Justine McLaughlin have this year toured with the senior National Team; whilst Kathryn Collins, Lana Harch, and Karla Reuter, plus Stocco, Neilson, and McLaughlin were members of last year's Australian Under 17 Team which contested the adidas Cup in America.

On the other hand, the stories of the two relatively unknown goalkeepers are of equal interest. Zoe Betteridge lives in Coffs Harbour and had been dabbling between playing on the field and in goals until recently. Injured at the wrong times, she hadn't really come to the attention of Northern NSW NTC Coach Mark Jones, but reports from the Holiday Coast Director of Coaching prompted a closer look.

The six-foot-plus youngster was soon registered in Northern's NSW Super League side, and now finds herself in the green and gold.

Matildas' Sarah Cooper (right): Many of the Young Matildas will be aiming to step into her shoes in the future.

Keeper Nikki Pichon's highest representative honours before last week was as a member of the NSW Youth Team last year. A member of the JETS Squad two years ago (feeder squad for the NSWIS), Pichon missed this year's trials for the NSW Institute of Sport, and currently plays Super League for Manly.

Regional centre Coffs Harbour must be beaming with the news of their three young proteges Betteridge, Harmonie Attwill, and Rose Dunne.

The latter two live in Newcastle these days, having made the big move to further their soccer prospects two seasons ago, and are obviously bearing the fruits now.

Three of Mulvey's other top contenders were unavailable for selection due to injury. NNSW striker and adidas Cup player Katie Gill, who highlighted her potential last week on the Matildas' Japan Tour, is sidelined with an untimely leg injury; Victoria's adidas Cup striker and WNSL Rising Star award winner Selin Kuralay, and Queensland defender Sarah Blackwell. Kuralay and Blackwell are both suffering unwelcome ankle injuries.

This team selection and tournament are the first steps in the campaign leading into next year's qualification tournament and World Youth Championship, and Mulvey is looking forward to seeing his new charges in action.

"It's up to these players who've been given this first opportunity to prove that they should be there when we get to the World Cup Qualifiers," said Mulvey. "They need to show they have the desire, the ability and temperament to play at international level. These internationals against senior national teams will be a good test for us, for the players and coaching staff, but a challenge we should all be looking forward to."

He added, "We have to make things happen very quickly. Our time together and preparation needs to be maximised - for us to learn about the players, and the players to learn about each other, to gel together."

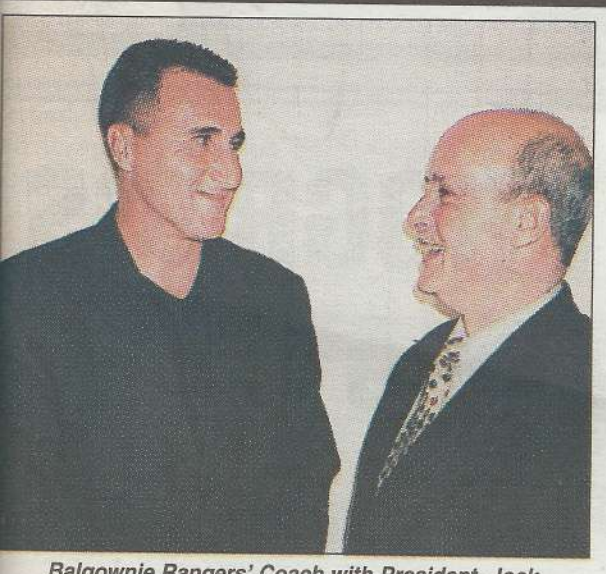
With regard to the ongoing selection process, Mulvey stresses he is committed to an open-door policy.

"As I have said, every player will get the opportunity at some stage, whether through me watching them at National Championships or National League, or bringing them into camp."

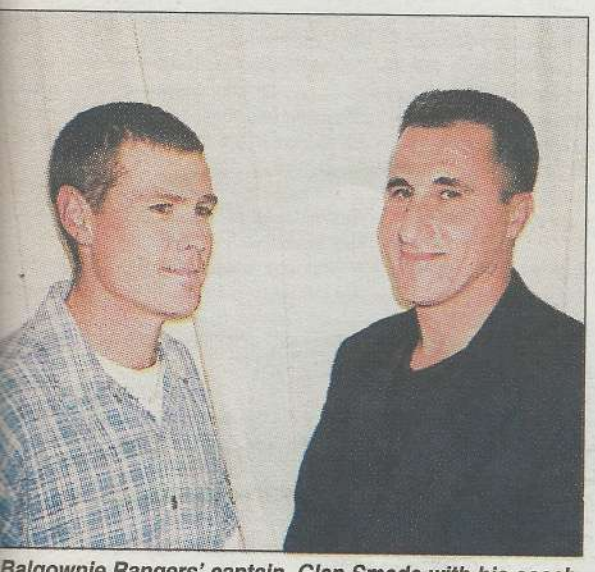
FIFA confirmed the establishment of the Women's World Youth Championship last October, and recently awarded the hosting rights to Canada.

Around ninety countries are expected to compete in the qualification tournaments around the world from which twelve nations will emerge to contest the inaugural Championship in August/September 2002. The Oceania qualifiers are scheduled for April 2002 in Tonga.

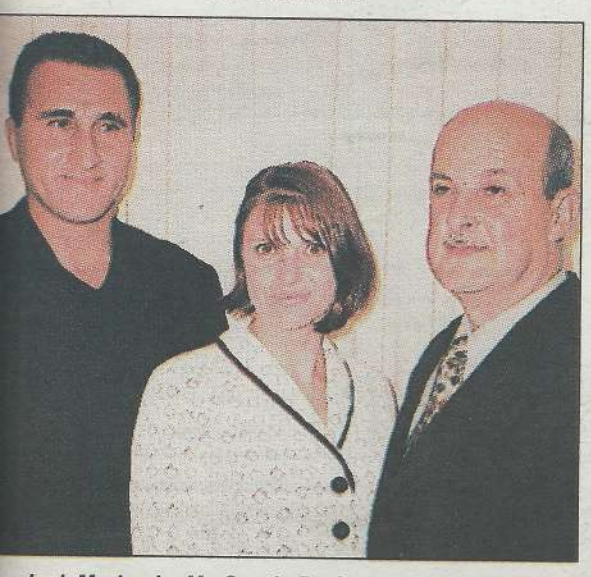
Balgownie Rangers Soccer Club's Sportsman's Dinner



Balgownie Rangers' Coach with President, Jock Morlando and Mario Vescio.



Balgownie Rangers' captain, Glen Smede with his coach Jock Morlando.



Jock Morlando, Ms Cynzia De Cont — Independant Candidate for Illawarra — with Mario Vescio.

"BARILA AL DENTE", Balgownie's 'Trifecta': from left, Frank Barila (22), Frank Barila (24) and Frank Barila 20. They're all cousins.

By John Economos

THE BALGOWNIE RANGERS SOCCER CLUB, the oldest Soccer Club in Australia, last Friday evening staged its first Sportsmen's Dinner at the Fraternity Bowling and Recreation Club at Fairy Meadow on the South Coast of NSW.

For the Dinner, the newly promoted team into the Illawarra Premier League had as its Special Guest speaker, former Australian World Cup captain, John Warren.

During his speech which held the almost 200 guests, (including all the Balgownie players), spellbound, Warren strongly suggested that Australia does have an excellent chance of qualifying for the World Cup Finals next year.

However Warren also went on to strongly warn that if Australia wished to qualify, she MUST win the first leg, (our home game in Melbourne at the M.C.G. in November/-December), at all cost, and by AT LEAST 2-0.

"In past World Cups, in our final qualifiers, although we would win, or do well in our away-games, we never won, or done well at home," he stressed.

In retrospect, Warren went on to elaborate: "We all very well remember what happened last time back in November of 1997 at the M.C.G. against Iran (2-2).

"Before that, (August 1993), it was against Maradona's Argentina where we drew 1-1 in Sydney in the first leg.

"Before that again, it was Israel in 1989 where again we drew 1-1, (Trimboli), in Sydney.

"Before even that again, (1986), down in Melbourne, in the second leg, we drew 0-0 against Scotland.

"We just HAVE to win the home leg, and win by at least TWO goals.

"We will not know which South American nation we will have to face till about a week or two before we have to play the first leg, again at the M.C.G.

"Having said all that, I honestly believe that this Australian side is the best individually, equipped team ever, to get us again to the World Cup Finals next year."

Special Guest Speaker and former Australia World Cup captain, John Warren.

Also attending the Balgownie Dinner was the Ward 3 Independent Candidate of Illawarra, Ms Cynzia De Cont.

The most surprised, but concerned politician, Ms De Cont, seriously quizzed Warren during 'Question Time', why he had mentioned during his speech that Soccer, (and for years), has been discriminated by the Media.

Warren whipped back: "You have to scan the newspapers to find a Soccer story in the sports sections.

"But if there is a crowd disturbance, anything on drugs or something negative that could or may involve Soccer, you're guaranteed that it will be headlined and whacked on a front page.

"All other sports get priority in the press, and this has not been the case for Soccer in years," Warren underlined not only to Ms De Cont, but to most of the stunned and silent attending guests.

Balgownie Rangers are coached by former Wollongong Wolves' tenacious defender, Jock Morlando and captained by defiant defender Glen Smede whilst the Youth team is most enthusiastically coached by former Apia goalscoring midfielder of the late 60s, Ray Poletto.

The highly active and ambitious President of the Balgownie Rangers Club, Mr Mario Vescio, stated to ABSW: "We have playing for us Marconi's striker Joey Bruni and we could soon be getting, (on loan), Marconi's attacking midfielder, Christian Care."

The Secretary of the Balgownie Club, Mr Vince Raschilla, evaluated: "It's our first season in the Premier League.

"It's our priority for the first year to consolidate our very existence at this level before we set out to achieve other targets," he stated.

Balgownie Rangers Soccer Club
Incorporated.
PO Box 512 Fairy Meadow NSW 2519

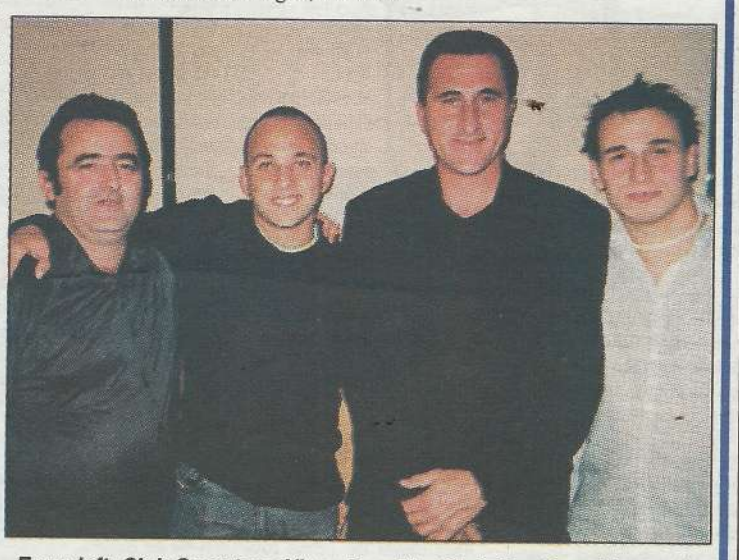
The Balgownie Rangers is the oldest, and still most active, Soccer club in Australia, having been formed as far back as in 1883.

In a unique situation, the Balgownie Rangers have three players with an identical full name.

The trio are cousins, each carrying the name of 'Frank Barila'.

Balgownie Rangers is the very same Club which in the early last Century spawned the then very famous player, Judy Masters.

Today, the Balgownie Rangers' very own, lush-green, most picturesque homeground, wedged in front of a glorious mountain range, has been named after him.



From left, Club Secretary, Vince Rascilla, Christian Care (Marconi), Jock Morlando and Joey Bruni.

President Mario Vescio, with some of the Balgownie players last Friday night. Far right side, Guest Speaker for the event, John Warren.

Victorian Premier League
236 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne. VIC. 3205
Phone: (03) 9682 9666 ● Fax: (03) 9682 9777

FINALS SERIES

PHOENIX AND BERGERS PROGRESS

By Bert van Bedaf

Bentleigh Greens bowed out of the Premier League finals when they lost to Altona East Phoenix 3-4 on penalties after both sides were locked at 1-1 at the end of extra time. The Phoenix now progresses to the cut-throat Minor Semi-Final next week where it meets the Bulleen Zebras.

At Olympic Park, penalty kicks were also the order of the day after Heidelberg United and Bulleen Zebras were locked at 1-1 at the end of extra time.

The Bergers prevailed 3-1 on penalties and now have earned the right take on Port Melbourne Sharks in the Major Semi-Final next week.

After a week's rest, minor premier Port Melbourne is raring to have another go at the Bergers. In their last encounter, Port beat the Bergers 1-0 with a John Paul Knezevic header in the 65th minute, while Alfonzo Opazo missed a penalty for Heidelberg in the 81st minute.

"It's been a good season," Port coach Harry Chalkitis said. "Last season Port finished third last."

"We reached the top five, which I was asked to do. We achieved the double and the minor premiership, which was a bonus and now we have a chance to get straight into the grand final," he said.

"It's been a great turn-around for us. We finished third-bottom last season and now we're in the finals series," club president Nick Papastergiadis said. "We're having a great season by any stretch of the imagination."

* Bill Brickell and his team will be at Port Melbourne next Sunday to broadcast the Port Melbourne v Heidelberg match live from 3pm on 88.3 Southern FM and 98.9 North-West FM.

Bergers triumph on final breath

By George Koukeris

A penalty shoot out was the decider in a sensational end to the Qualifying Final between Heidelberg United and the Bulleen Zebras in front of a 1000-strong crowd at Olympic Village last Sunday.

The Bergers produced one their most remarkable victories in years, downing Zebras 3-1 in a penalty shoot after both teams were locked at 1-1 after extra time.

Heidelberg got off to a flying start that almost paid off for Nick Lazarevski who missed a golden opportunity for the lead in the ninth minute. Dean Tartaglia, Jimmy Latinopoulos and Paul Della Rocca made a huge impact on the match from there on as the three Bulleen defenders settled the tempo in the Bergers forward line and kept the forwards at bay.

In the 38th minute, Danny Gnjidic gave the Bergers their worst nightmare.

A sensational break from Sava Rusmir down the left flank split the guard of Nick Schwal, Sean Cunningham and Bill Zarogiannis with little resistance and the forward push was created superbly by Gnjidic who finished off the play with convincing style in the zone.

Ollerton said afterwards a key decision was made at half time to rearrange the defence, which obviously was not strong enough to hold the potent forward line of the Zebras. Eric Vassiliadis, who suits to the role of stopper, was pulled back with immediate results.

At half time, the Zebras went to the dressing rooms with a handy 1-0 lead that was looking certain to carry them through to Port Melbourne next week.

For 45 minutes Heidelberg threw everything they had at the Zebras. George Georgiadis and Cameron Brown worked extra to feed the ball for Opazo and Lazarevski who both clearly were not having their days.

It seemed only a matter of time before the call from referee Cain Naumcevski would inevitably signal a well-deserved victory. But in the eyes of Peter Kakos and his teammates the game wasn't yet over and in the last 30 seconds of normal time the Bergers finally managed to penetrate.

They caught the Zebras completely off guard in the 89th minute. Cameron Brown intercepted MacNicol and pushed the ball back into attack for one last time.

This time the delivery was sensational as Kakos made the right moves around the defence to fire from point blank range uncontested.

The moment sent the crowd into raptures as the hundreds who were just about to drive off, returned.

EXTRA TIME

In extra time, the Golden Goal applied to produce the winner. The Bergers, revived from their sudden fight back, relished the momentum and pushed forward as if it were the start of another match.

Damien Vojtek and Opazo made the first move that almost ended the match working through the defence of Della Rocca to come within whiskers of bagging the Bergers second.

Damien Guglielmi who is usually tagged the quiet achiever stamped his name on the match with plenty of commitment. A move late in the second half of extra time almost paid dividends had it not been for the side post getting in the way of a brilliant shot from 15 metres.

PENALTIES

Vjotek drew first blood as he clinically put away the first penalty for the Bergers.

MacNicol stepped up first for the Zebras but the tall midfielder encountered a determined 'keeper Jim Kourtis, who brilliantly saved the shot for a 1-0 lead.

The 'Holy Grail': Only five teams are now vying for the coveted Victorian Premier League trophy.

Next up for the Bergers was De Propertis who just as Vjotek sent Michael Theoklitos diving the wrong way.

Guglielmi was second for the Zebras, but the nerves got the better of him and his shot went straight into the hands of Kourtis.

Opazo was third for Heidelberg, but the excitement of an early wrap-up had his shot soaring into the clubrooms way behind the goals. Danny Gnidic sensing an opportunity stepped up third for Bulleen and blasted the first one past Kourtis for a score of 2-1 after three.

Next up was the first savior for Heidelberg, Kakos who with a mean looking run up pounded their third and set the stage for the final blow. Amazingly, the finishing touch ended with Kourtis as he became the hero of the day saving the shot of experienced Warren Spink, who hesitated on the final moment. He parried his shot into the hands of Kourtis, giving victory to Heidelberg.

After the match a pleased Ollerton applauded the efforts of his players to hang in there and not give up. Ollerton also made strong note of Vassiliadis who was instrumental in the revival and especially delighted in the end with Kourtis who held his nerve well and save three penalties.

Mullen was not as easy to get a word, clearly disappointmented at having lost the match after having gone within seconds of victory.

PHOENIX ARE FLYING HIGH

By Bill Brickell

Altona East Phoenix progressed to the second week of the finals with a 4-3 penalty shoot-out win after a bruising encounter with a luckless Bentleigh Greens in a game that finished 1-1 after extra time.

Bentleigh made all the early running, attacking relentlessly down the right wing where Tom Karapatsos was having a personal battle with Peter Groidis.

After 15 minutes and against the run of play, Altona East was first to score. Ross Antoniadis went long with a free kick from halfway, Bentleigh 'keeper Glenn Clarke was quick off his line but dropped the high ball to the feet of Terry Antoniadis who slammed it into the vacant net.

They could have gone further ahead, but Donnelly, put through by Suric, could get no power on his shot.

The Greens were starting to control midfield now, with Stelios Drakos making some storming runs from the back, and Altona East was being forced into errors. A poor backpass put Michael Anderson one-on-one with Phoenix custodian Jamie Cooper but Cooper forced him wide.

The Phoenix almost got a second when a long throw from Groidis found Donnelly spinning on the ball, but his blistering shot was pushed wide by Clarke.

On 40 minutes Greens levelled the score when Anderson drilled the ball across the face of Cooper's goal, finding Nilo on the far right post to stab it in.

The second half became a midfield scrap with referee Jim Ouliaris producing a string of yellow cards as nerves reached breaking point and fatigue was setting in.

An Anderson weak shot went to Cooper and, soon after, a goalmouth scramble was cleared by Ross Antoniadis.

The Phoenix then had a dissallowed goal.

Terry Antoiadis passed to Suric attacking down the left wing, who fed inside to Nick Papadopoulos and then the ball went to Frank Valentic on the right.

His long cross fell to Terry Antoniadis whose shot deflected to Suric to smash home, but the flag was up.

With time running out, Giovanni De Amicis had a death-or-glory shot from deep but put it 30 metres over.

Full time came moments later.

EXTRA TIME

Extra time saw Altona East dominate the tiring Greens. Phoenix coach Chris Taylor brought Mohamed El Kersh on for Suric and the substitute's fresh legs made an immediate impact with repeated forays down the right touchline. First he found Steve Pantilidis inside the Bentleigh area, but Pantilides lost control.

Then he fed Papadopoulos whose blistering shot was pushed wide by Clarke. A fine save.

It was the last attacking move of the game. With a 1-1 final scoreline and daylight fading fast, penalty kicks were required to find a result.

Ross Antoniadis's weak effort failed, then Kalimeris shot over the bar to level the score. It was three penalties a piece when Gerry McDonagh walked forward to take Bentleigh's fifth spot-kick but Cooper saved spectacularly to his right.

It was left to Griodis to put Phoenix into next week's action with a drive that Clarke got a touch on but couldn't keep out.

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

FINALS SERIES

ELIMINATION FINAL

Altona East 1 (Antoniadis) **Bentleigh Greens 1** (Nilo)
Altona East wins 4-3 on penalty kicks

QUALIFYING FINAL

Heidelberg United 1 (Kakos) **Bulleen Zebras 1** (Gnjidic)
Heidelberg United wins 3-1 on penalty kicks

Victorian Premier League

FINALS SERIES

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL
ALTONA EAST PHOENIX v BENTLEIGH GREENS
at
PAISLEY RESERVE - 3.00PM

QUALIFYING FINAL

HEIDELBERG UNITED v BULLEEN ZEBRAS
at
OLYMPIC PARK - 3.00PM

For more information, log onto
www.soccervictoria.org.au

QUEENSLAND SOCCER FEDERATION

"Perry Park" Abbotsford Road, Mayne. Brisbane. 4006.
Phone: (07) 3252 5327 ● Fax: (07) 3252 1137 ● www.qldsoccer.com.au

PREMIER LEAGUE WRAP-UPS By Glenn Davis

By Glenn Davis

Brisbane City coach Danny Wright has expressed a keen interest in a move south to coach South Melbourne in the national league next season.

Wright, 36, played for seven seasons with South Melbourne before returning to Brisbane for the final five years of his illustrious playing career which culminated in the Brisbane Strikers historic grand final win victory under Frank Farina at Lang Park four years ago.

Wright has confirmed he's held brief talks with South Melbourne over the new coaching position but nothing has been finalised to date.

"I have spoken with the club and I've expressed an interest in coaching them," Wright said.

"It's an opportunity to coach one of the most successful clubs in Australian history."

Wright is only in his second year of coaching after winning Queensland's premier league title with Brisbane City in his first season.

Business commitments almost forced Wright to step down from Brisbane City this year, but he decided to stay on with the club which is well placed to win back-to-back titles following its 2-0 win over cellar dwellars Pine Rivers on Saturday night.

It's believed some South Melbourne board members are concerned how Wright's coaching duties would be affected by his business of running a Brisbane motel.

However, Wright sees no problem.

"My business is now family-run and I've got an extended family which helps run it now," he said.

"If the South Melbourne job did eventuate it would be quite manageable."

Brisbane City led 2-0 at halftime against Pine Rivers with both goals coming from striker Alan Cameron.

Despite the win Brisbane City, who beat North Star 1-0 midweek to clinch a Queensland Cup finals berth, remain in second place one point adrift of leaders Wynnum with a home game in hand against Bundaberg.

Wynnum were held to scoreless draw at home by Brisbane Lions which infuriated coach Peter Tokesi.

Wynnum had three goals disallowed in the first half, two for offside and another for an infringement.

"We were all over them in the first half and their only chance came when Des Hughes hit the crossbar," Tokesi said.

"The second half was fairly even but at the end of the day Lions would have been happy with a point while we weren't.

"This could just about wreck our season as the destiny has been in our hands, now we've got to rely on someone beating Brisbane City."

Tokesi said the mood was sombre in the Wolves changing rooms after the match.

"We've drawn our last two games against City and Lions and we probably should have won both," he said.

Tokesi was annoyed with officials against Lions."It's rare we get away with anything in our games but Lions were quite physical," he said.

Wynnum lost defender Luke Adair with a suspected fractured cheekbone which followed a clash with diminutive Lions striker Michael Baird.

"This is not sour grapes but Luke is over six foot tall and Michael (Baird) is quite small but somehow in a challenge and with 10 minutes to go he had to leave the field with a lump which blew up later the six of a tennis ball on his cheekbone," Tokesi said.

"The referee would have had to have seen the incident and did nothing."

Wynnum will now play Brisbane Lions, minus two key players, in the remaining Queensland Cup semi final which has been rescheduled yet again but this time but to its rightful place at Perry Park on Wednesday night.

"Initially we were supposed to play them at Perry Park last week and things would have been right," Tokesi said.

"But now Brendan Rodgers has to go to Melbourne for work commitments and we've lost Luke Adair."

In others matches Easts, under new coach Col Bennett, went down 2-1 to Rochedale Rovers.

Bennett, a former Socceroo and national league stalwart, took over at Easts midweek after coach Frank Byrne stepped aside.

Byrne, who brought Easts up from the semi-professional league, offered to stand down if the club could find a suitable replacement.

"I know Col well and I have no grudges with him," Byrne said.

"Relegation wasn't an issue as we were eighth on the table and we were playing to make the top six and weren't concerened with relegation. "I probably made a mistake by going to the committee and told them if they had a better option I would resign.

"I'm kind of kicking myself for doing that now."

Rochedale, who held a special general meeting on Sunday to try to overcome serious financial problems, led 1-0 at half time following a Cameron Hunt header before Danny Flaskas scored the winner with five minutes remaining.

Coach Keiran Cooper believed Rochedale should have had the scrappy match wrapped up at half-time.

"Easts battled hard and made things difficult after the break and had the better of the game for a 15 minute period," Cooper said.

"Luckily we broke against the run of play with five minutes to go and scored the winner."

Easts' goal came from a costly lapse in concentration from young Rochedale keeper Chris O'Connor who failed to clear a backpass enabling Easts's Shane Coffey to score a soft goal.

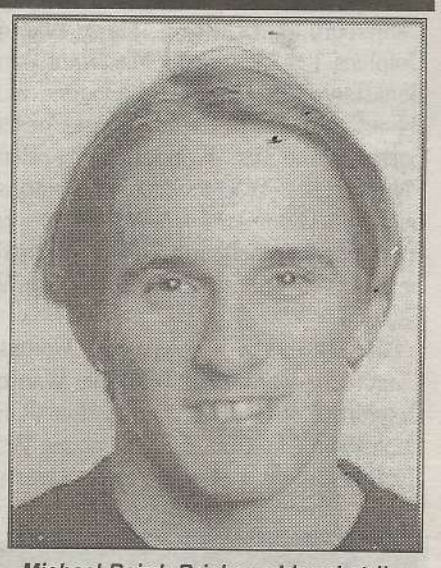
Rochedale's win could prove costly for the Top Six playoffs late in the season after losing midfielder Roy Huth with a knee injury.

"Roy will see the physio this week and could be in doubt for our next game agains Brisbane City," Cooper said.

In others weekend games Steve Unsworth goal kept Taringa Rovers' hopes of a top six finish alive with a 1-0 win over Mt. Gravatt, Ipswich downed Bundaberg by a similar scoreline after Matt Hilli scored in the first half.

In the remaining game the Gold Coast and Toowoomba drew 1-1.

Danny Wright: Interested in coaching South Melbourne.



Michael Baird: Brisbane Lions' striker whose clash with Wynnum's Luke Adair resulted in a fractured cheek for the Wynnum defender.

PREMIER FOOTBALL

QUEENSLAND PREMIER LEAGUE

FIXTURES (ROUND 19)

Saturday 28th July

Mt Gravatt v Gold Coast	6.00pm
TBA Raiders v IPSW Knights	7.00pm

Sunday 29th July

B'berg Waves v Wynnum	2.45pm
Brisbane Lions v Pine Rivers	4.00pm
Brisbane City v Rochedale Rovers	2.45pm
Eastern Suburbs v Taringa Rovers	3.00pm

ALL THE RESULTS ... ALL THE RESULTS ... ALL THE RESULTS ...

● Round 18 ●

XXXX League

Wynnum	0	Brisbane Lions	0
Gold Coast	1	TBA Raiders	1
Rochedale Rovers	2	Eastern Suburbs	1
Pine Rivers	0	Brisbane City	2
IPSW Knights	1	B'berg Waves	0
Taringa Rovers	1	Mt Gravatt	0

XXX Reserves

Wynnum	3	Brisbane Lions	2
Gold Coast	2	TBA Raiders	2
Rochedale Rovers	2	Eastern Suburbs	2
Pine Rivers	2	Brisbane City	5
IPSW Knights	7	B'berg Waves	1
Taringa Rovers	1	Mt Gravatt	1

XXXX Youth

Wynnum	0	Brisbane Lions	6
Gold Coast	6	TBA Raiders	0
Rochedale Rovers	4	Eastern Suburbs	0
Pine Rivers	5	Brisbane City	2
IPSW Knights	0	Sunshine Coast	4
Taringa Rovers	0	Mt Gravatt	0

● Round 21 ●

Semi Profesional League

Albany Creek	3	Grange Thistle	4
The Gap	6	Capalaba	0
Acacia Ridge	3	Rocklea Utd	0
North Star	3	Newmarket	3
Mitchelton	2	Souths Utd	2
Slacks Creek	2	North Pine	1
Redlands Utd	1	Olympic Utd	0

Semi Pro Reserves

Albany Creek	2	Grange Thistle	0
The Gap	0	Capalaba	0
Acacia Ridge	2	Rocklea Utd	1
North Star	1	Newmarket	1
Mitchelton	2	Souths Utd	4
Slacks Creek	3	North Pine	0
Redlands Utd	4	Olympic Utd	0

Semi Pro Youth

The Gap	1	Capalaba	0
Acacia Ridge	4	Rocklea Utd	0
North Star	1	Newmarket	4
Mitchelton	1	Souths Utd	1
Slacks Creek	4	North Pine	1
Redlands Utd	5	Olympic Utd	0
Albany Creek	2	Grange Thistle	0

NSW Youth League Results

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

GRADE 17: Newcastle United 2 Canterbury Marrickville 2, Manly Warringah Dolphins 1 St George 1, Macarthur Rams 0 Bankstown City Cubs 4, Wollongong Wolves 2 Fairfield Bulls 0, Central Coast Coasties 1 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Penrith Panthers 1 Blacktown City Demons 0, Sydney Olympic vs Northern Spirit (Postponed), Leichhardt Tigers 0 Sutherland Shire 4, Marconi Stallions 2 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1.

GRADE 15: Newcastle United 5 Canterbury Marrickville 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 St George 1, Macarthur Rams 3 Bankstown City Cubs 5, Wollongong Wolves 2 Fairfield Bulls 1, Central Coast Coasties 0 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Penrith Panthers 0 Blacktown City Demons 3, Sydney Olympic 2 Northern Spirit 1, Leichhardt Tigers 0 Sutherland Shire 2, Parramatta Eagles 2 Sydney United 1, Marconi Stallions 0 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0.

GRADE 14: Leichhardt Tigers 0 Northern Spirit 4, Newcastle United 2 Canterbury Marrickville 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 0 St George 1, Macarthur Rams 1 Bankstown City Cubs 3, Wollongong Wolves 8 Fairfield Bulls 0, Central Coast Coasties 0 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Penrith Panthers 0 Blacktown City Demons 2, Sydney Olympic 1 Northern Spirit 3, Leichhardt Tigers 0 Sutherland Shire 3, Parramatta Eagles 1 Sydney United 0, Marconi Stallions 0 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0, Newcastle United 0 Sutherland Shire 0.

GRADE 13: Newcastle United 2 Canterbury Marrickville 2, Manly Warringah Dolphins 2 St George 1, Macarthur Rams 1 Bankstown City Cubs 3, Wollongong Wolves 2 Fairfield Bulls 0, Central Coast Coasties 1 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 1, Penrith Panthers 0 Blacktown City Demons 5, Sydney Olympic 1 Northern Spirit 0, Leichhardt Tigers 2 Sutherland Shire 1, Parramatta Eagles 0 Sydney United 1, Marconi Stallions 1 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0.

SUPER CADET LEAGUE

GRADE 11: Leichhardt Tigers 0 Sutherland Shire 1, Parramatta Eagles 1 Sydney United 0, Marconi Stallions 4 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, Wollongong Wolves 2 Blacktown City 4, Sydney Olympic 1 Northern Spirit 1, Central Coast Coasties 1 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 2, Macarthur Rams 5 Bankstown City Cubs 0, Wollongong Wolves 4 Fairfield Bulls 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 0 St George 0,Penrith Panthers 1 Blacktown City Demons 2.

GRADE 12: Leichhardt Tigers 1 Sutherland Shire 1, Parramatta Eagles 0 Sydney United 1, Marconi Stallions 1 Bonnyrigg White Eagles 1, Sydney Olympic 1 Northern Spirit 2, Central Coast Coasties 0 Eastern Suburbs Wanderers 0, Macarthur Rams 3 Bankstown City Cubs 0, Wollongong Wolves 1 Fairfield Bulls 0, Manly Warringah Dolphins 0 St George 1, Penrith Panthers 2 Blacktown City Demons 1.

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

Wolves Wise Recruiting - Club Coach Ron Corry quietly has gone about bringing in quality players while promoting some young talent to replace the regular first graders departed to greener pastures. In comparison with some high profile NSL clubs, the Wolves seem to have assembled another solid squad capable to throw out a confident challenge and that well before others have even started to sign players.

Newcomers are striker Sean Babic, all-round play-maker Alex Castro, former U/17 National player Naume Sekulovski and now the latest recruit is midfield player Badui (Buddy) Farah (22), a Lebanese International and former Marconi versatile player, born in Sydney.

He is a raw talent, still to reach his peak, coming originally through Junior soccer in the Fairfield District and played for seven season with Marconi, being a member of the club's successful Youth Grade team. His favourite position is sweeper, stopper or attacking midfield schemer with a good work ethics. The Wollongong Club could be ideal for him to thrive as a top performer.

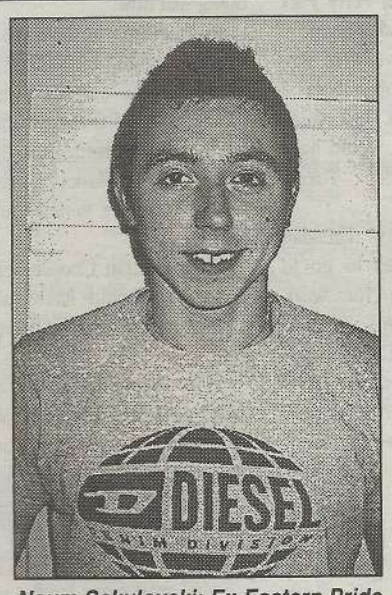
These four additions to the Wolves squad promise strength and depth for another tough soccer season.

Coaching Staff Confirmed - The Wolves head coach Ron Corry will again be ably-assisted by Stuart Beedie who formed a successful partnership in the past season with the head coach.

The club's General Manager Graeme Heaney expressed everybody's delight to have Stuart back on board, being an integral contributor to the team's performance in his role as assisting coach, with his background as a professional soccer player in England and Scotland as well with coaching positions at various clubs.

With a stable coaching staff re-appointed plus eleven players from last year, including quality newcomers and talented youth players, the Wolves can look forward with confidence to defend their NSL title.

Development Officer Available - local Junior soccer clubs wishing to bring variety to their training routine, are encouraged to contact the Wolves office on



Naum Sekulovski: Ex-Eastern Pride midfielder now linking-up with the Wollongong Wolves.

4226 3988 to request a visit by the club's Youth Development Coach Eddie Tesoro. He is ready to come to any training session, if invited by the 26 or so Illawarra Junior soccer clubs.

Is Ambition Gone Too Far? - U/11 Wolves youngster Ricky Goodchild has been invited when spotted by an English soccer club scout, to trial with Westham United in the UK.

He is leaving this week with his mum travelling with him. The talent spotter must have been impressed by what the youngster showed on the field. The experience for the kid from Australia for a week's stay or so in England would be overwhelming.

Combined School Soccer Teams Visit - Two teams from Cordoba, Argentina, are touring Australia and have organised two games against local opposition, namely Illawarra Sports High School and Bulli Soccer club.

-Games are scheduled for this Wednesday 25/7. at Balls Paddock; kick-off is for 4.15pm with U/16's and 5.30pm against Bulli youth grade U/18's. The touring group consist of 55 people including 20 supporters with little English knowledge between them but determined to learn more about Australia.

ICU Premier League Soccer - Round 15 with results and reviews: 4 home wins, 2 away wins, 18 goals scored, no change at the top but the points gap narrowed, only 4 points difference between third and first placed. Bottom teams not making progress.

WESTERN SUBURBS 1 WOLLONGONG OLYMPIC 0 - 4th played 6th; Lucky outcome for West with a hand-penalty converted by Matthew Bailey. Olympic lost a player who was sent-off early in the game but still created opportunities and possibly should have done better. Now facing stiff oppositions next, while West should not be troubled in the next round.

NORTHERN UNITED 0 LYSAGHT 6 - A run-away result for the visitors, the host unable to stem the flood of goals, shooting practice for the opposition strikers, both clubs facing formidable opposition next, North most likely to stay last while Lysaght could move up a spot with a win.

PICTON RANGERS 1 KEMBLAWARRA 0 - 9th faced the competition leaders and caused a boil-over, the odd goal scored by Nathan Tring. Home team coach Greg Goodfellow admitting his side was fortunate having all players put in a top defensive effort to keep the more fancied opposition at bay, Picton's keeper had a great game keeping a clean sheet. The next round ins crucial for both clubs, for Picton to stay clear of relegation while Kemblawarra are out to stay in front.

BULLI 3 SHOALHAVEN CITY 0 - 10th played 11th, critical for both teams to do well, goals coming from Shane Flack (2), David Calvert, far to good for the visitors, not travelling well at all. The next round provides tough opposition for both sides heaving to lift their game if they are going to win points.

BAGLOWNIE RANGERS 1 PORT KEMBLA 2 - 8th played 2nd placed, both well established in the league, the home team won their first meeting away but this time saw the visitors victorious, goals first for Port by Ned Askelic, Michael Clare and one goal from Victor Costabile for the host who had a great chance in the final minute to equalise, only to drive the ball straight at the opposition keeper.

Port was pleased with the points even though a bit lucky, now just two points adrift of the top team, however Port now faces a very tough opponent next while Balgownie should collect the points against one of the lower placed sides. Coach Jock Morlando was not a happy man at all with some decisions during the match.

CONISTON 3 CRINGILA 1 - 3rd played 5th, a match decided in the final minutes, the score at half time 1:1, first goals by the host's Yani Sekulovski with a tremendous header leaving the keeper stranded, matched on the other end by another great header to equalise with Alan Laproto, the match in the balance, played at a cracking pace. The winning goals came from Dean Merola after an error in defence, with Anthony Guido scoring a late third goal. Cringila deserved better but on the day the home team succeeded. Both meet top sides in the next round, either moving up a spot or losing ground.

Points Table: Kemblawarra 35 (scored most goals 46), Port 33, Coniston 31, West 25, Cringila 25, Olympic 24, Lysaght 21, Balgownie 20, Picton 16, Bulli 14, Shoalhaven 10, North 1. *Reserve Grade* Port 35 points, Youth Grade Lysaght 36 points.

ICU First Division = 1 home team win, 4 away wins, 2 draws, 1 game postponed, 35 goals scored, top 3 teams successful, 4 more round to go, the leading sides are Warilla 33 points, Kiama 32, Tarrawanna 30, Bellambi 26, Helensburgh 26, Albion Park WE 25, remaining 11 teams are out of the running.

SHELLHARBOUR CITY 0 SOUTH COAST UNITED 7 - a surprising score, with the goalkeeper of the home side send-off early and the flood of goals unstoppable, the keeper was later cleared by the Judiciary Committee, the home side did not perform well after the send-off, lost composure, the visitors not moving up the ladder even though recording some good results lately.

BERKELEY 1 KIAMA 3 - important win for 2nd placed Kiama, going about their business without much fuzz, should be able to pressure the leading team, and perhaps take over soon, the home team stays in the lower half of the table.

FERNHILL 2 BELLABMI 2 - a fine effort by the home team against a higher placed visitor which have the opportunity to move even higher up but have some tough teams still to play.

BARBARIANS 3 HELENSBURGH 3 - a game of contrasts, the lower placed home side was leading 3:0 against the higher positioned visitors with 20 minutes to go, looking ready to spring an upset, goals scored by Dragi Toskovski (2), and Nick Biracoski before allowing the visitors back into the game, rather disappointing for home team coach Roberto Hernandez, his side can still move up some places if discipline is tight while in a good position during the match.

HIGHLANDS 2 UNIVERSITY 0 - both teams placed close together on the points ladder, the result not predicted that clear cut, both not moving much higher up, perhaps reaching the top six if more points are secured.

ILLAWARRA UNITED 0 WOONONA 9 - a one-sided event nothing at stake anymore for both, just going through the motion to end the season.

ALBION PARK WE 1 TARRAWANNA 2 - very important win for the visitors, staying in touch with just 3 points or one win off the leading team, for the home team a let-down, dropping down now to six spot, not expected after a well started competition but still in the hunt with easier opposition in the final rounds and possible points to be picked up.

Junior Soccer - around the South Coast a total of 105 games in competition from U/10's to U/18's Boys and Girls soccer are scheduled over the weekend with many more in the ROO-BALL programme.

Referee Quiz - a serious injury to a player occurs shortly before the end of a drawn junior game, requiring an ambulance to be called onto the ground to move the player carefully, the game must finish before the player can be moved for the senior game to kick off. What should be done?

(*Answer:* cease play and game, report to the ground marshal, inform the secretary the game is over).

Winter Super League

VALENTINE SPORTS PARK

235-257 Meurants Lane, Glenwood 2768 ● Phone (02) 9629 1800

ROUND 19

RAMS TROUNCE HAPLESS LIVERPOOL

MSC Liverpool 0 Macarthur Rams 7

The Macarthur Rams have posted their first win in five weeks by demolishing M.S.C Liverpool 7-0 in a local derby on Sunday afternoon at Hammondville Oval.

In a game that presented plenty of early opportunities for both sides, it was the Rams that eventually took control of the match late in the first half and then trampling all over the faltering home side who were left with 10 men early in the second stanza.

With superior ball control, the Rams dominated M.S.C Liverpool who were rendered helpless in what seemed non-existent defence. Eric Williams finished with a brilliant hat-trick for the match.

Bankstown City 1 Stanmore Hawks 0

Bankstown City consolidated top spot on the competition table with a nail biting 1-0 win over a courageous Stanmore Hawks outfit at Jensen Park last Sunday.

In a highly entertaining contest, the large crowd had to wait until nine minutes from full time for the gameís only goal. Bryan Raeburn getting the honours when he slotted in a loose ball resulting from a goal mouth scramble following a Bankstown free kick.

In an evenly matched encounter, both sides traded raids on each other's goal, with the ball regularly travelling from goal to goal. In the end, weight of possession and a vociferous crowd edged the home side to victory.

Rockdale City 1 Manly Warringah 0

The Rockdale City Suns were able to beat Manly Warringah Dolphins 1-0 in front of 700 supporters that braved the rain on a dreary day at the Rockdale Ilinden Sports Centre.

The sole goal came from Suns captain Spase Najdoski in the 12th minute.

Midfielder Steve Cklamovski crossed for Francis Awaritefe, who couldn't get his shot away, the ball falling for Najdoski to score his 13th goal of the season from close range.

The Suns have now won consecutive home games 1-0 against class opposition, Dulwich Hill and Manly Warringah, with a player sent off in each match.

Fraser Park Jets 0 Hurstville City 0

The Minotaurs 2001 campaign came to its untimely end when held to an uninspiring 0-0 draw with Fraser Park.

The game started slowly and with the sending off of Jets goalkeeper Con Anastasiadis in the 28th minutes degenerated even further.

Hussein Jomaa hit the right hand upright for the Minotaurs in the 28th minute but in a game where self preservation seemed the overriding aim, the remaining minutes were played out with little excitement or adventure from either side and a draw was a fitting result.

MSC Liverpool Squad: Yet again soundly beaten, this time by the Macarthur Rams 7-0. Liverpool sit lonely at the foot of the Winter Super League table having only won one game.

Fairfield Bulls 2 Hajduk Wanderers 1

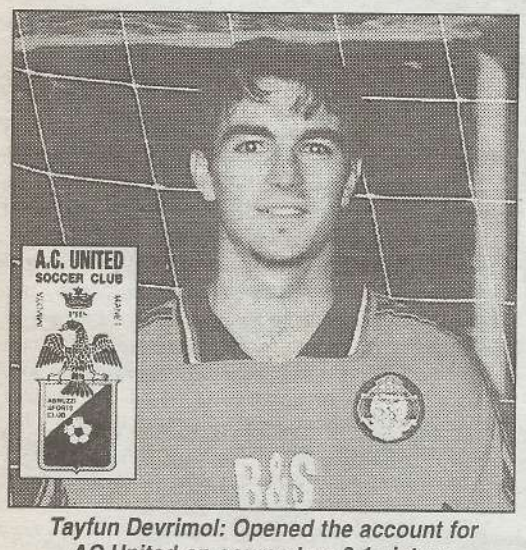
Fairfield Bulls downed the Hajduk Wanderers 2-1 at Hajduk Stadium on Saturday in a game that wasn't without incident.

Hajduk's captain Mark Abi-Arrage was stretchered off the field in the 72nd minute leaving Phil Pavela's camp in a mess.

To add insult to injury, a 91st minute all-in-brawl between Bulls' Marc Hoenselaars and Hajduk's Joseph Ellul left the fan base champing at the bit when the pair were sent-off by referee Nick Asargiotis.

The Bulls' two goals came via Mathew Borg who charges to the top of the league's top goal scorer list with 16 goals, along with Dulwich Hill striker Steve Karavatakis. Tim Gledhill's lone goal brings his tally to six goals this season.

UNITED CLIMBS OVER HILL



Tayfun Devrimol: Opened the account for AC United on course to a 3-1 victory.

Steve Karavatakis: Scored Dulwich Hill's solitary goal.

Dulwich Hill 1 AC United 3

AC United has surged back into finals contention with a 3-1 demolition of Dulwich Hill at Arlington Oval on Sunday.

Tayfun Devrimol opened the scoring with a great goal in the 20th minute while a double from midfielder Robert Sacco early in the second half sealed it for United. .

An 80th minute penalty from Steve Karavatakis put some respectability in the scoreline but in reality, a penalty was the only way Karavatakis and Dulwich Hill were ever going to crack the committed United defence.

WINTER SUPER LEAGUE LADDER

(AFTER ROUND 19)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bankstown City Lions	**19**	**12**	**4**	**3**	**35**	**13**	**40**
Fairfield Bulls	18	11	4	3	59	22	37
Manly Warringah	19	11	2	6	44	25	35
Dulwich Hill	18	10	3	5	32	20	33
Rockdale City Suns	19	10	3	6	37	32	33
AC United	19	9	4	6	28	24	31
H'ville City Minotaurs	19	7	4	8	19	28	25
Macarthur Rams	19	6	4	9	28	26	22
Stanmore Hawks	19	6	2	11	22	38	20
Hajduk Wanderers	19	5	4	10	28	41	19
Fraser Park	19	5	3	11	30	38	18
MSC Liverpool	19	1	3	15	18	73	6

For further information see: www.soccernsw.com.au

Winter Super League

www.soccernsw.com.au

ROUND 20

SUNDAY 29TH JULY

Hurstville City Minotaurs v Bankstown City *First Grade: 3.00pm*	St George Stadium
Stanmore Hawks v Fairfield Bulls *First Grade: 3.00pm*	Arlington Oval
Hajduk Wanderers v Dulwich Hill *First Grade: 3.00pm*	Hajduk Stadium
AC United v Rockdale City Suns *First Grade: 3.00pm*	Abruzzi Oval
Manly Warringah Dolphins v Macarthur Rams *First Grade: 3.00pm*	Cromer Park
Fraser Park Jets v MSC Liverpool *First Grade: 3.00pm*	Fraser Park

Rescheduled Game

WEDNESDAY 25TH JULY

Dulwich Hill v Fairfield Bulls *First Grade: 7.30pm*	Fraser Park

Catch up with all the latest news on the Winter Super League and other NSW Soccer news on our website:

www.soccernsw.com.au

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Copa America

Mexico's Daniel Osorno (right) celebrates after scoring his team's second goal against Chile in their quarterfinal match on Sunday.

Without Scolari, Brazil tackle drug-smeared Honduras

Somewhere the fates have been kind to Brazil thus far at the Copa America as the four-times world champions chase a third continental title in a row.

Despite having to weather a storm of criticism from home media upset that the current vintage bear little relation to the Peles and Tostaos of the samba stars' glorious past the Brazilians have made it to the last eight without too much nailbiting following last week's win over Paraguay.

Late goals from Beletti and Denilson patched up the damage inflicted by a defeat to Mexico on day one - but couldn't defuse criticism from former star Socrates, who blasted poor coaching as the reason behind below-par recent results and demanded an improvement.

Brazil's quarter-final comprises a veritable David against Goliath match-up against Honduras in the western city of Manizales last night (Monday).

Coach Felipe Scolari himself is banned from the bench after his dismissal against the Paraguayans.

Honduras' squad was also decimated over the weekend with star player Oscar Lagos thrown out of the Copa America after testing positive for cocaine and marijuana.

Lagos produced a positive drug test after Honduras lost 1-0 toCosta Rica in their Group C match on July 13. A second test was carried out but officials decided to exclude Lagos from the competition until the result is known.

"After the second test, the disciplinary commission has decided that he must not play in the rest of the Copa America," said a statement from CONMEBOL.

Honduras' Amado Guevara celebrates after scoring against Uruguay last week.

The Hondurans and fellow quarter-finalists Costa Rica benefited from no-shows by Argentina and Canada after a wave of kidnappings and bombings in Colombia almost forced the event's cancellation.

And both newcomers have seized their opportunities by racing through the opening stage.

Brazil, while not underestimating their minnow foes, could almost be forgiven for privately thinking that another title — it would be their seventh — is as good as in the bag.

The withdrawal of the Argentines, who have dominated South American World Cup qualifying, left the 'auriverde' as overwhelming favourites to claim the trophy and go some way towards making up for their poor World Cup form.

Scolari is hoping inconsistent star Denilson will turn in the kind of match-winning performance against the Hondurans which he displayed against Paraguay, conjuring a 3-1 win after the favourites had been a goal down and heading for the exit door.

With striker Ewerthon likely to be ruled out through injury, Guilherme is likely to partner Denilson as the Brazilians go for the jugular.

Scolari, who replaced Emerson Leao just over a month ago in the Brazil, hot-seat, is mulling the benefits of a 4-3-2-1 system rather than the 3-5-2 he has largely leaned on to date."We're looking at a few things as Honduras are playing very well and they could pose us a a few problmes," Scolari said over the weekend.

"We must respect them as they have players of international quality, such as Amado Guevara," added Scolari, picking out the Honduran skipper, whose three goals including a shock winner against Uruguay have propelled the little Central American state into the second phase.

The suspension of Roque Junior means Roger Machado Marques or Anderson Luizao will come in at the back for the Brazilians. The Hondurans may be the rank outsiders but what they lack in reputation they more than make up for with spirit.

"Once on the pitch it's 11 against 11 and we will be out there to win, make no mistake," said Guevara.

"Now we're gunning for Brazil," was the headline in Honduran daily La Tribuna, which added that "the last guest to arrive is lighting up this festival" — a reference to the side's late entry into the competition.

Mexico dumps Chile to book S-final slot

Mexico raced into the semi-finals of the Copa America for the fourth time in their history on Sunday with an impressive 2-0 win over Chile.

Jesus Arellano netted the opener on 18 minutes and Daniel Osorno closed the gate with the second ten minutes from time at the Hernan Ramirez Villegas Stadium to send Javier Aguirre's Mexicans through to a meeting with Uruguay, who stopped Costa Rica 2-1 later on Sunday.

Osorno made a swift impression as he scored just nine minutes after coming on as a substitute for Antonio De Nigris.

Arellano bagged the first, ending a fine run with a left-foot shot under the Chilean keeper, nationalised Argentine Sergio Vargas, having first taken a headed pass from De Nigris.

Osorno was similarly merciless with his finish, another left-foot effort from the edge of the box.

The Mexicans are playing in the event for only the fifth time and made the perfect start to the group phase by beating favourites Brazil.

But they then faltered as the "Aztecs" could only draw with Paraguay and then lost to Peru to scrape into the last eight with just one goal scored in their three games.

Aguirre lambasted the Peru game as the worst the team had played under him and demanded a mighty improvement, which he duly got.

He now hopes the side can go on to reach the final for the second time having placed third in both of the last two editions of the tournament.

They only made their debut in 1993 in Ecuador and made it to the final only to bow to Argentina, who are absent this time having withdrawn citing doubts about security in Colombia, a country racked by political violence.

QUARTER FINALS

RESULTS/FIXTURES

(July 22)

Chile .....0 Mexico 2

Costa Rica ...1 Uruguay 2

(July 23)

Colombia v Peru

(July 24)

Brazil v Honduras

SEMI-FINALS

(July 26)

Mexico v Uruguay

(July 27)

Colombia or Peru v Brazil or Honduras

(July 29)

Third-place play-off

FINAL

SENEGAL SNATCH W-CUP TICKET AS EGYPT DEMAND REPLAY AGAINST ALGERIA

Senegal stunned pundits by qualifying for the 2002 World Cup after trouncing Namibia 5-0 in Windhoek on Saturday in a Group C qualifier.

It will be the tiny West African nation's first-ever appearance at soccer's most-glamorous event.

The West Africans finished level on 15 points with pre-group favourites Morocco, but had a superior goal difference - plus 12 against plus five. Egypt came third with 13 points after being held 1-1 in Algeria.

Pape Thiaw (2), Al-Hadji Diouf, Khalilou Fadiga and Moussa Ndiaye scored for the Senegalese, who dominated most of a match staged in cold, overcast conditions and led 3-0 at half-time. Ahmed Hossam raised Egyptian hopes of pipping Senegal when he put the Pharaohs ahead after 59 minutes in the Mediterranean city of Annaba, but Yacine Bezzaz levelled near the end.

Cameroon, South Africa and Tunisia have also qualified for the finals from Africa with the last place to be settled on July 29 when Nigeria must defeat Ghana at home to overtake Liberia in Group B.

Meanwhile, aggrieved Egypt has applied to the world football governing body FIFA with a request to replay Saturday's World Cup qualifier, saying their players were intimidated by the hostile home crowd.

The tense match was delayed for a quarter of an hour after Egypt went 1-0 ahead when Algerian fans threw bottles and stones to the pitch.

According to BBC Egyptian Football Association chief Youssef al-Dahshoury said on Sunday: "We are protesting over the hostile atmosphere in which the match was held.

We want the match to be played again on neutral ground.I didn't want to complain against the fellow Arab nation, but when I heard about the hostile atmosphere, I decided I shouldn't leave Egypt like this."

Brazil league in fresh crisis

The Brazilian championship, due to start in only two weeks time, appears almost certain to be delayed due to a legal dispute in what has become a sadly familiar routine.

The Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF), which last year failed to organise the tournament altogether, says the contest cannot begin due to a row over whether Remo, a club from the northern city of Belem, should be included in the first division.

The CBF has lodged an appeal against a court order ruling that Remo be included but will have to wait for a response because the court is closed for staff holidays until July 31.

The championship is due to start one day later.

"Today, we can't hold the championship without Remo," the CBF's legal director Carlos Eugenio Lopes told reporters.

The case was brought by the city of Belem rather than Remo themselves to avoid FIFA legislation which bans clubs from taking footballing disputes to civil courts, the CBF said.

The Brazilian championship is traditionally disrupted by rows and legal disputes, before, during and after the competition.

Most arguments centre around how many and which clubs should take part, the rules and dates and venues of matches.

Last year, the CBF refused to organise the championship when Gama, a club from Brasilia, successfully brought a case against their relegation from the first division.

Instead, Brazil's clubs got together and organised a mammoth tournament called the Joao Havelange Cup which featured 116 clubs and finished more than one month behind schedule.

Former Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira, now in charge of Porto Alegre club Internacional, criticised the latest chaos, blaming it for the poor recent performances of the national team.

"This spoils everything because we don't know when the team is going to play," he said. "We can't tell our players when the championship is starting."

"And they still try to blame the coach and the players of the national team for everything which has gone wrong."

POLICE NAB RIOTING GERMAN FANS

Austrian police arrested 42 German soccer fans and three local supporters following brawls before and after a friendly match in Vienna penultimate Sunday.

Police said on last week 39 Bayern Munich fans were arrested after a fight in a canteen at the Vienna Football Club ahead of a friendly against Austria Vienna.

Around 150 German supporters stormed the canteen and threw beer glasses and chairs at around 20 Austrian fans, six of whom were injured. Police said two officers were also hurt.

After the match, around 300 Austrian supporters ran on to the pitch at the Franz-Horr stadium in Vienna and tried to get into the Bayern fans' enclosure.

Police said they managed to stop the supporters and arrested two Austrians. A further four fans were arrested outside the stadium. Bayern won the match 2-1.

Police detain an Austrian soccer fan after a friendly match between Austria Vienna and Bavaria Munich in Vienna. Some 42 German soccer fans and three Austrian supporters were arrested when brawls broke out before and after the match.

COPA MASCOT DISAPPEARS

Colombians are baffled as to the whereabouts of Ameriko, the multi-coloured, futuristic Copa America mascot from the planet Ko who caused a furore when he was unveiled.

Ameriko's predecessor at the 1999 Copa America, a rare wild pig from the depths of the Paraguayan Chaco, was lined up with the teams before game every game and waved at the crowd.

In contrast, nobody has seen hide nor hair of Ameriko since his appearance at the competition draw in January. Neither the police nor soccer officials have any idea what has happened to him.

Colombian police chief Luis Ernesto Gilibert was not amused when asked if Ameriko had become the latest victim in a country with the world's highest kidnapping rate, responding with an emphatic no.

Soccer officials have no idea where he is, either.

"The truth is that I haven't seen Ameriko and I don't know where he is," said Colombian Football Federation director Ramon Jesurum.

Organisers of the opening ceremony in Barranquilla were equally bemused.

"I haven't seen him," said Rosana de Lignarolo, the choreographer who organised the event in which 900 dancers took part.

Perhaps the mascot is ashamed to show his face after receiving a chorus of criticism when he was presented to a disbelieving public.

Critics say the unidentifiable blue, lilac, yellow, red, black and orange creature bears more resemblance to something from a Japanese Pokemon cartoon than anything vaguely Colombian. Ameriko is not the only one missing from the devalued tournament.

Argentina refused to take part in protest at the chaotic organisation of the competition.

Most other countries also chose to rest their top players as it has been squeezed into the middle of the South American World Cup qualifying tournament.

Brazil's Rivaldo, Romario and Roberto Carlos, Uruguay's Alvaro Recoba, Peru's Claudio Pizarro, Colombia's Juan Pablo Angel and Chile's Marcelo Salas are among the absentees.

SPANISH FA BANS 2 OVER FAKE PASSPORTS

Argentine forward Gustavo Bartelt and Real Oviedo's Ivory Coast-born defender Idrissa Keita have been suspended for 12 months as part of the Spanish Football Federation's (RFEF) investigation into false passports.

Bartelt, who played part of last season for Rayo Vallecano on loan from AS Roma, and Keita are the latest players to have their playing licences withdrawn by the federation.

Bartelt used an irregular Italian passport to gain his EU status, while Keita's French passport was found to have been obtained by using illegal documentation.

The RFEF said neither player was given a longer ban because they were not directly implicated in the falsification of any of the documents.

Clubs in the top two Spanish divisions are limited to three non-European Union players on the pitch at any one time.

Bartelt and Keita join four other players who have been suspended in recent weeks by the RFEF.

Brazilian players Alvaro and Baiano of Las Palmas were banned from playing for six months in June after it was found they had played the first half of the season with irregular Portuguese passports.

Tenerife's Brazilian forward Barata was then given a 12-month suspension after it was found that his Italian passport was not genuine.

The RFEF has since opened an investigation into the club's role in the affair.

Argentine goalkeeper Martin Herrera of Alaves escaped with just a month's ban because the RFEF found that although his documentation was irregular he did possess the qualifications necessary to acquire Italian nationality.

Three other players from first and second division sides are still under investigation by the RFEF as a result of the passport scandal that hit European football last season.

FC Schalke's Victor Agali (left) celebrates a goal with Sven Vermant (centre) and Emile Mpenza (right), during their German League Cup final match against Hertha Berlin, over the weekend which Schalke lost 1-4.

RAUL IS KING OF EUROPE!

Real Madrid striker Raul has been named by UEFA as the best forward in the Champions League for the second year in a row.

The 24-year-old Spanish international was the top scorer in last season's competition with a total of seven goals and has notched a record 28 strikes in the Champions League overall.

He also topped the scoring charts in the Spanish league last season with 24 goals, one more than Barcelona's Brazilian forward Rivaldo.

The club said that Raul will receive the award on August 23 in Monte Carlo, when the draw for next season's competition is made.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE QUALIFYING DRAWS

Galatasaray or KS Vllaznia v Levski Sofia or SK Brann Omonia Nicosia or Crvena Zvezda v Bayer Leverkusen
Ajax v Celtic
Shakhtar Donetsk or Lugano v Borussia Dortmund
Skonto Riga or Wisla Krakow v Barcelona
Bohemians or Halmstad v Anderlecht or Sheriff Tiraspol
Porto or Barry Town v Grasshoppers
Lokomotiv Moscow v Tirol Insbruck
NK Maribor or Rangers v Fenerbache
Slavia Mozyr or Inter Bratislava v Rosenborg
Slavia Prague v Panathinaikos, Parma v Lille
Steaua Bucharest or Sloga Jugomagnat v Dynamo Kiev
Torpedo Kutaisi or FC Copenhagen v Lazio
FC Haka or Maccabi Haifa v Liverpool
Ferencvaros or Hajduk Split v Mallorca

**First leg matches to be played on August 7 or 8, with second leg games billed for August 21 or 22.*

WORLD

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

The big transfers of the summer belong to Lazio - gone is Juan Sebastian Veron and replacing him is Gaizka Mendieta.

When a few weeks ago Man Utd announced that it had signed the Argentinian Veron, for a record Premier League transfer amount, it seemed that Lazio had lost a most valuable player and that their midfield wouldn't be the same.

However, last week the Rome-based club announced that it had secured the services of Valencia's, and possibly Spain's, best player Mendieta.

It is a straight swap therefore for Lazio with Mendieta certain to fill the hole left by Veron.

Lazio, like all the Serie A clubs, have started pre-season training. In fact their campaign kicks-off in early August with the preliminary rounds of the Champions League.

Naturally coach, Dino Zoff, said that he was delighted with the Mendieta purchase - a player that Lazio has been chasing ever since he came to light at Valencia a few ago.

❑✱❑✱❑✱❑

Joining Lazio as one of the seeded teams in the preliminary rounds of the Champions League is Parma.

An early August kick off for the tournament, in the middle of the European summer, is absolutely ridiculous. From a player's point of view surely something has to be done to prevent player burn out.

Parma will field this year Japanese midfielder, Hidetoshi Nakata, in their team. From a marketing point of view he is surely the smartest summer acquisition by any team.

Nakata was first discovered by Perugia a few years ago and their flamboyant president, Luciano Gaucci, signed him. Instantly he was a hit at the club. On the field he didn't really shine mainly due to injury, but off the field he was a star.

In Japan Nakata is absolutely adored. Perugia all of a sudden became the most popular club in Japan.

It opened up doors for the club in the Japanese market but the club couldn't really capitalise on the opportunity.

Nakata was eventually transferred to Roma where he spent most of his time on the bench. The creative midfielder occasionally got on the field and even scored the odd spectacular goal for Roma.

This summer he now lands at Parma. So why is this such a smart buy for the club?

Nakata may find himself on the bench a lot at Parma as well. However, the following he will generate back in his home country Japan will, as always, be enormous.

Parma's major sponsors are Parmalat because the major shareholder of the multinational dairy company is the Tanzi family - the same family that owns the Parma soccer team.

So President Stefano Tanzi's purchase may be wiser than one first thinks. It will open up the doors for Parmalat in the very lucrative Japanese market.

As a company Parmalat has used football sponsorship to create brand awareness all over the world including Australia (see Carlton and more recently Brisbane Strikers).

By the enormous interest that Nakata generates back in Japan, and Japanese television wanting to screen his every match, Parmalat has secured for itself the best possible advertising that it cculd ever wish for.

Nakata's signing is just another marketing masterstroke in the multi million dollar business that is called football!

❑✱❑✱❑✱❑

As mentioned earlier all clubs are now back into the swing of things and training is well and truly under way.

The other day Roma coach, Fabio Capello, said that the Scudetto won just over a month ago was a distant memory. He went on to emphasise that the team must start from scratch again. The biggest disappointment for Roma in the transfer market was their failure to secure the services of Parma defender Fabio Cannavaro.

At 28, Cannavaro still has a few good years left in him and Roma were absolutely desperate to sign him. They tried everything but Parma managed to hang on to their star defender.

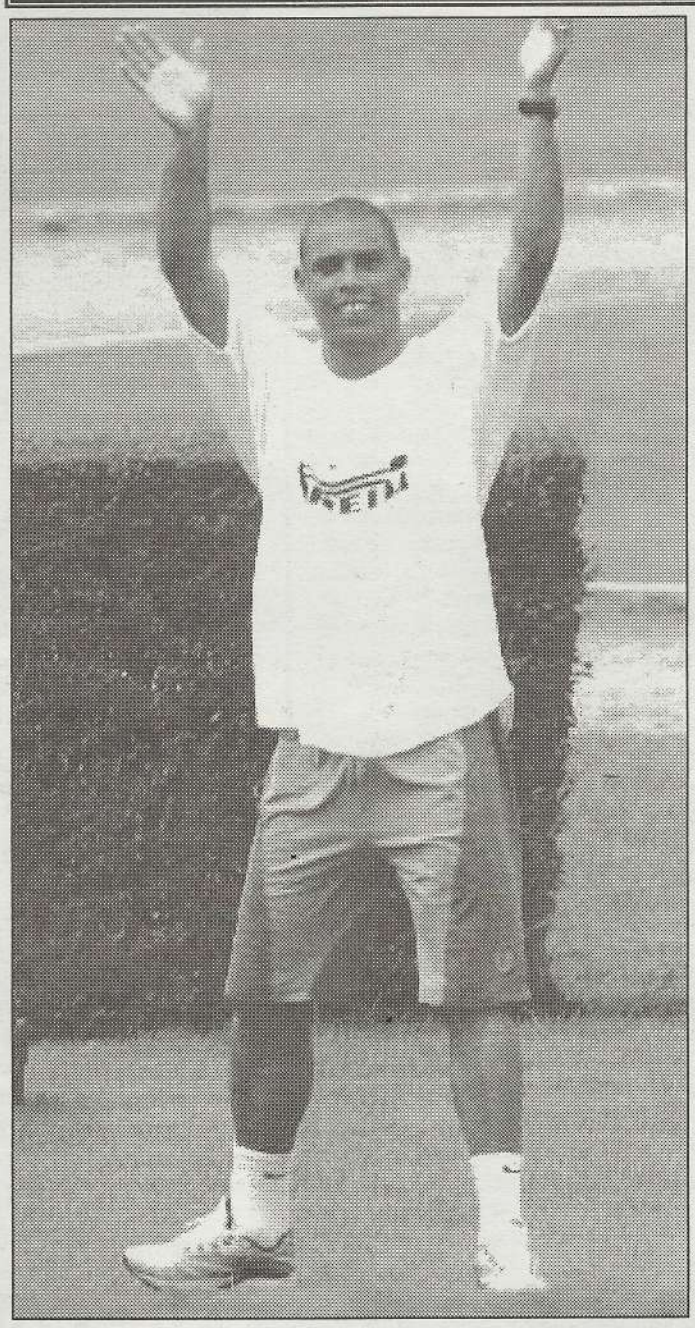
Meanwhile, as mentioned in this column last week, AC Milan's coach, Fatih Terim, is still hot favourite to be the first Serie A coach sacked.

The likeable Turk, who coached Fiorentina last year and Galatasaray previously, must surely be tired of all the speculation.

Former Parma and Juventus coach of recent years, Carlo Ancelotti, is the name that is constantly mentioned.

Ancelotti in the last two years guided Juventus to second place in the league, is unemployed for the upcoming season and is a former AC Milan player - all the ingredients appear to be there!

Italy ... Italy ...



Brazilian star, Ronaldo waves to the fans last week when he resumed training with his Inter Milan teammates at the Appiano Gentile resort after a lengthy injury lay-off.

Ban is unfair, Recoba moans

Inter Milan's Uruguayan striker Alvaro Recoba has branded as unfair the upholding of a one-year ban for his part in a false passport scandal.

Recoba told Inter's official website there had been no wrong doing in the affair and that the Serie A club was looking into possible legal action over the decision.

"I feel very sad but I come out of these events with my head held high. We did nothing wrong, except for perhaps trusting the wrong people ... but this is not wrongdoing and I never tried to hide anything," Recoba said.

The appeals commission of Italy's soccer federation last week confirmed bans of up to a year for 11 players in the Italian league, following an inquiry into the way non-European Union players had gained EU passports. Their clubs were also handed heavy fines for their part in the scandal.

"(Inter president Massimo) Moratti is very angry for what happened. He told me we will react. He was very affectionate and his phone call comforted me," Recoba said.

"The sentence is unfair. We will do something. Now the president and the lawyers are looking into what to do.

"As for me, I thought there would be more understanding and that justice would be done. I hoped for justice, but maybe I was wrong.

Alvaro Recoba

"But I will react and will be able to come back soon, as a champion, like a true Inter player should do," he said.

With last week's confirmation of the ban, there is a possibility that Recoba will seek a transfer out of the Italian league in the hope of circumventing the ban and plying his trade elsewhere. If he considers that option, the gifted striker will attract keen interest from a motley of Spanish and English clubs who will welcome his sublime skills in front of goal.

DEL PIERO PLEDGES FUTURE TO JUVE

JUVENTUS star Alessandro Del Piero has revealed that he would like to stay at the bianconeri for the rest of his career.

The Italian international, who is a big fans favourite at the Stadio Delle Alpi, has admitted he has no desire to leave the club.

The 26-year-old striker, who will takeover from Antonio Conte as Juve's captain next season, is confident that he can lead the team to success next season

"Even though you can never tell what will happen in the future, I think I can say that I really hope that I'll be a Juventus player forever," said Del Piero.

"I know that now I will have an incredible responsibility since I'll also be the captain but I am ready to start this new season full of enthusiasm and optimism. I truly hope that I'll be able to help this team to win."

Del Piero also admitted that he was surprised to see Zinedine Zidane and Filippo Inzghi leave the club for Real Madrid and Milan respectively this summer, but was confident that they can could without the star duo.

Alessandro Del Piero

"I must say that I expected something to change but I honestly did not think that Zidane and Inzaghi would have left," said Del Piero.

"However I think that both sides had agreed on a change, because both players have left without any controversy.

"Without Zizou the team will obviously be different but I'm sure that Marcello Lippi has more than one solution ready for our side and that he will succeed in lining-up the team in a way that allows each and every one of us to play in our natural roles."

Meanwhile, Juve are set to follow Serie A rivals AS Roma and Lazio by floating on the Italian stock market.

IFI, the company of the Agnelli family which owns the club, announced that 35% of Juventus shares will be floated following its official listing.

MBOMA HAPPY AT PARMA

Parma ace Patrick Mboma has revealed he wants to stay at the Serie A club, despite reports linking him with a move to the English Premiership.

The 30-year-old striker failed to hold down a regular place in the Parma team last season and he had been linked with moves to Fulham, Tottenham Hotspur and Sunderland.

The Cameroon international, who won the African Player of the Year award last year, after helping the Indomitable Lions to win the African Nations Cup and Olympic title, admitted he is a big fan of The Premiership but that he is more than happy to stay in Serie A.

"I have heard numerous rumours regarding my future, but for the moment I still consider myself a Parma player," Mboma told Gazzetta Dello Sport.

"I cannot deny that English football interests me considerably, but given that I am currently playing in the best league in the world, I would like to stay where I am."

The former Cagliari star is optimistic of his side's hopes of success this season, despite the loss of Lilian Thuram and Gianluigi Buffon and he feels the addition of Japanese ace Hidetoshi Nakata from Roma will boost the side.

"Instead of worrying about the players who have left, we should put our trust in the new players," said Mboma.

"Players of the calibre of Nakata undoubtedly have the ability to increase the quality of the team.

The Champions League situation is a very delicate one as the qualifying games are played before the season has even started, so it is difficult to find top physical condition".

ENGLAND ... ENGLAND ... ENGLAND

Liverpool needs new players, Owen warns

Michael Owen has pleaded for Liverpool to buy new players to liven up the squad.

Despite claims by manager Gerard Houllier, supported by coach Sammy Lee, that there is no urgent need for reinforcements, Owen believes there should be signings.

"I think every team has to strengthen in two or three places. It's dangerous to buy a lot of players because you need the squad to know each other, but just to buy two players every year livens things up.

"I don't think we need to go and buy five or six world-class players. Like Manchester United, we've got team spirit and lads who have come through the youth system and into the first team.

"We have always had that base of home-grown players, very good players, and when you add to that it doesn't cause a problem."

Liverpool have recruited just one player — Norwegian John Arne Riise from Monaco for $6million. Houllier, however, reiterated that no other signings are imminent. "I will only sign players who are better than what we have got and after what we achieved last season I have got great faith in this squad,' he said.

"I believe we have the three best strikers in England and seeing Jamie Redknapp come back from injury is like signing a new player."

England striker Owen was on target again, hitting a late goal in a 2-0 victory in Singapore last week. Emile Heskey headed Liverpool's opener just before half-time against the Singapore Select XI.

It is estimated that they will make $12m from sponsorship deals and endorsements from the week-long trip.

Liverpool striker, Michael Owen (right) signing club shirts along with other teammates during last week's playing tour of Thailand.

RADZINSKI FINALLY COMPLETES EVERTON MOVE

Canada striker Tomasz Radzinski has completed a $6million transfer from Belgium champions Anderlecht to premier league side Everton.

Radzinski, 27, signed a four-year deal after passing a medical at the Merseyside club last week and immediately flew out to Tuscany, Italy, to join his new team mates at a pre-season training camp.

In the absence of Everton manager Walter Smith, chief-executive Michael Dunford and chairman Sir Philip Carter completed the deal, a club spokesman said.

Poland-born Radzinski does not need a work permit because he has a Belgium passport.

Radzinski said he was relieved to have completed a move from Anderlecht, for whom he scored 23 goals for last season including five in the Champions League.

"Anderlecht made it a little bit more difficult than I expected but I'm glad that everything worked out fine," he told Everton's official website.

"Paul Gascoigne and Duncan Ferguson are names that you hear about all over Europe and I'm delighted to have such big names and great players in the same team.

"If I can have the same season as I did in Belgium last year then it will be tremendous. Hopefully I can get the goals that will get this club back to where it has been in the past."

Radzinski is likely to step into the gap left by Francis Jeffers, who joined Arsenal in a 10-million-pound deal last month.

Tomasz Radzinski: Bound for Goodison Park at last.

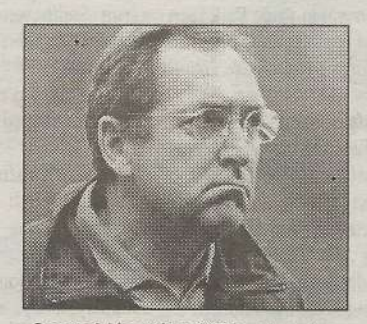
'Why Liverpool is on Asian tour'

Liverpool coach Gerard Houllier has defended his club's decision to travel to Singapore and Thailand for a pre-season tour just three weeks before the qualifying stages for the Champions League.

The UEFA Cup winners will play an as yet unknown opponent in the preliminary rounds of the lucrative competition on August 7 and the trip to South East Asia is part of the preparation for the coming season for Houllier and his squad.

"Because we were coming here we started our preparation for the season one week earlier than usual," the Frenchman told reporters.

"We made a promise that we would come and you have to keep that promise. The players are playing and they are playing for the public. These fans buy shirts and pay money to support the club so why can't we come to the stadium to see these fans?



Gerard Houllier: "The club has to meet the fans more than we have done."

"Manchester United are doing the same thing. We aren't talking about Queens Park Rangers (English second division club). We are talking about Liverpool and it's good to show the team to the fans.

"It's good for the players to know they have people who support them out here. The club has to meet the fans more than we have done.

"It not just about playing football but who you play football for. This trip has strengthened the character. In terms of team building, it's been good."

Liverpool's game against a Singapore Select XI last week was the club's first in the island-state since 1991. A crowd of over 48,000 turned out to see Emile Heskey and Michael Owen score in the 2-0 victory.

The four-time European champions left Singapore last week for Bangkok, where they played Thailand.

SPURS SECURE ZIEGE AT LAST

German international defender Christian Ziege completed his move from Liverpool to Premiership rivals Tottenham late last week for an undisclosed fee.

British newspaper reports suggest the fee for Ziege is close to $6.3million.

Tottenham manager Glenn Hoddle welcomed the arrival of the German who failed to secure a regular first-team place at Anfield.

"Three years ago, Christian was probably the best wing-back in the world and he has a lot to prove to the public and probably a bit to prove to himself," said Hoddle.

"We've got him at the right time and if we can work with him in the right way I'm sure we'll get the best out of him because he's still at his peak. He's only 29 and has two or three years of his peak left."

Ziege was plagued by loss of form and injury throughout his season with Liverpool which resulted in him making just 11 Premiership starts.

Following his 5.5 million pound (7.7 million dollar) transfer from Middlesborough, Ziege spent most of his time on the bench with England international Jamie Carragher keeping the German out of the team.

Hoddle believes Ziege has much to prove over the next few months if he is to regain his place in the German squad with the World Cup a year away.

"I know the quality he's got and he has a great incentive with the World Cup coming up in that he's got to get back in the German team," he said.

ATTENTION READERS!

ABSW will next week start its build-up to the new 2001/2002 English Premier season, with a full fixture list of all the 380 games to be played over the marathon 38 weeks.

Our countdown to the big kick-of on August 18 will also include extensive insights into all the 20 teams as well as their new-buys, strengths and prospects in the coming season. STAY TUNED.

PLATT TARGETS ERIKSSON'S JOB

David Platt has said he is hoping his recent appointment as England's under-21 coach will be a stepping stone to one day taking over the senior side.

Sven Goran Eriksson

"I played for and captained my country and that's the pinnacle of anybody's career," Platt told newspapers. "To manage your country is a similar pinnacle. It's something I have always wanted to do.

"It's a dream of mine to manage my country. There's a feeling around that they (the Football Association) are looking to groom somebody for the job, and this is a personal opportunity. "I don't see there being any point in going into management if you don't want to be the best."

Platt, who played under England coach Sven Goran Eriksson at Italian club Sampdoria in the mid-1990s, said: "You will have to ask the FA why they have hired me. Perhaps they see potential.

"All I can do is seize an opportunity and do it. I'm not naive enough to think it's a foregone conclusion that I'll get the (senior) job. I have to progress, to develop and to get good results.

"The fact that they are going for a full-time under-21 job shows it's one step away from the main national side."

Platt, 36, who scored 27 goals in 62 England appearances between 1990-96, quit as manager of first division Nottingham Forest two weeks back to take the job of coaching England's under-21 team.

Platt, who replaced Howard Wilkinson, will take charge of the side for the first time in a friendly at home to the Netherlands on August 14.

WORLD

FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until August 22)

1	France	810	69	Bolivia	516	137	Grenada	298
2	Brazil	795	70	Senegal	509	138	Yemen	295
3	Argentina	764	71	Burkina Faso	506	139	Rwanda	286
4	Italy	735	72=	Algeria	505	140	Myanmar	283
5	Germany	726	72=	Kuwait	505	141	Tajikistan	271
6	Spain	715	74	Iraq	504	142	Surinam	268
7	Portugal	712	75	Bosnia-Herz	501	143	Luxemburg	263
8	Paraguay	711	76	Cyprus	500	144	Ethiopia	262
9	Czech Republic	709	77	Macedonia FYR	498	145	Andorra	255
10	Netherlands	695	78	Canada	496	146	Palestine	253
11	Romania	689	79	Georgia	495	147	Bangladesh	251
12	Yugoslavia	688	80	Estonia	493	148	Maldives	248
13	Mexico	687	81	Congo DR	488	149=	Liechtenstein	246
14=	Colombia	682	82	Cuba	483	149=	Sri Lanka	246
14=	England	682	83	Haiti	482	151	Korea DPR	245
16	United States	672	84	Belarus	480	152	Tanzania	239
17	Denmark	670	85=	Albania	475	153	Antigua & Barbuda	235
18	Croatia	668	85=	New Zealand	475	154	Botswana	230
19	Sweden	659	87	El Salvador	473	155	Benin	225
20	Russia	658	88	Indonesia	470	156	Nepal	220
21	Norway	654	89	Gabon	469	157	Dominica	216
22	Tunisia	647	89	Qatar	469	158	Gambia	215
23	Ireland Republic	640	91	Oman	467	159	San Marino	213
24	Poland	638	92	Congo	460	160	Bermuda	209
25	South Africa	633	93	Syria	456	161	Cayman Islands	207
26	Belgium	631	94	Lithuania	455	162=	Cape Verde Is.	206
27	Trinidad & Tobago	622	95	Latvia	453	162=	Dominican Rep.	206
28=	Morocco	621	96	Guinea	451	164	British Virgin Is.	202
28=	Saudi Arabia	621	97=	Armenia	449	165	Kyrgyzstan	196
30	Uruguay	620	97=	Namibia	449	166	Laos	194
31	Chile	619	99	Lebanon	440	167=	Belize	187
32	Japan	614	100=	Jordan	437	167=	Eritrea	187
33	Costa Rica	610	100=	Vietnam SR	437	169=	Chinese Taipei	182
34	Cameroon	609	102	Kenya	423	169=	Vanuatu	182
35=	Slovakia	608	103	Moldova	422	171	Cambodia	178
35=	Turkey	608	104	Kazakhstan	421	172	Mauritania	172
37	Scotland	606	105	Wales	416	173	Chad	165
38	Egypt	602	106	Northern Ireland	413	174	Samoa	158
39=	Korea Republic	599	107	Barbados	412	175	Guyana	154
39=	Nigeria	599	108	Singapore	410	176	Cook Islands	152
39=	Slovenia	599	109	Malaysia	404	177	Tonga	151
42	Cote d' Ivoire	594	110	Mali	399	178	Philippines	143
43	Austria	592	111	Uganda	390	179	Netherlands Ant.	124
44	Israel	586	112	Panama	388	180	C. African Rep.	121
45	Jamaica	584	113	Azerbaijan	383	181=	Guinea-Bissau	115
46	**AUSTRALIA**	583	114	Libya	380	181=	Macao	115
47	Ukraine	579	115=	Turkmenistan	377	183	Bahamas	111
48	Honduras	578	115=	Venezuela	377	184	Sao Tome e Principe	110
49	Bulgaria	577	117	India	376	185	Pakistan	106
50	Ecuador	571	118	Bahrain	363	186	Aruba	101
51	Iran	566	119	Faroe Islands	359	187	Niger	95
52	Iceland	565	120	Malawi	357	188	Mongolia	94
53	Peru	560	121	Mozambique	353	189	Nicaragua	89
54	Hungary	559	122	Sudan	351	190	Brunei Darussalam	86
55	Ghana	557	123	Fiji	349	190	Equatorial Guinea	86
56	Angola	555	124	Madagascar	348	192	Seychelles	79
57	Greece	552	125	Mauritius	341	193	Djibouti	76
58	Guatemala	548	126	Tahiti	336	194	Anguilla	65
59	Finland	545	127	Lesotho	329	195	Papua New Guinea	61
59	Zambia	545	128	St Lucia	327	196	Somalia	56
61	Thailand	541	129	St Kitts & Nevis	324	197	Puerto Rico	55
62	Switzerland	539	130=	St Vincent/Gre	323	198	US Virgin Islands	48
63=	China PR	527	130=	Swaziland	323	199	Guam	27
63=	Uzbekistan	527	132	Sierra Leone	314	200	Turks and Caicos Is.	21
65	Togo	520	133	Malta	312	201	American Samoa	16
66	Liberia	519	134	Hong Kong	310	202	Bhutan	14
67=	UAE	518	135	Solomon Islands	309	203	Montserrat	11
67=	Zimbabwe	518	136	Burundi	305			

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*

Transfer News ... Transfer News ...

Saviola: Joins Barcelona at last.

Saviola swell Barca ranks

River Plate's 19-year-old Argentine international striker Javier Saviola has signed a six-year deal with Barcelona, the Spanish club said last week.

"I am very happy that the player is at last part of Barcelona football club," Saviola's representative Alfredo Cabrera told reporters.

"I now hope the player will be able to live up to a great club like Barcelona."

The teenager is reported to have joined the Catalan club for a fee of $28.14 million and was presented to the media on Friday.

Saviola, nicknamed the Rabbit because of his protruding teeth, was in the spotlight at the recent World Youth Cup, scoring a record 11 goals in Argentina's triumphant campaign.

He scored a hat-trick for the hosts as they beat France 3-1 to reach the semi-finals. He then notched two more goals in a 5-0 demolition of neighbours Paraguay before adding one more in a 3-0 victory over Ghana in the final.

Saviola is the fifth signing by Barcelona since the end of last season.

Swedish international defender Patrik Andersson, French defender Philippe Christanval and Brazilians Fabio Rochemback and Geovanni have already been officially presented as Barcelona players.

RAVANELLI U-TURN LEAVES DERBY COUNTY IN TATTERS

Fabrizio Ravanelli has turned his back on a free transfer to Derby County after talks with Lazio general manager Massimo Cragnotti on Saturday.

The veteran forward's decision throws into doubt the Italian side's move for Atletico Madrid star Kiko.

Derby seemed on the verge of signing Ravanelli earlier last week after the two parties agreed a two-year contract. The 32-year-old's arrival at Pride Park then seemed to depend on him obtaining his release from Lazio.

"I have spent some time with Fabrizio and he seems genuinely enthusiastic at the prospect of returning to the Premiership with Derby County', Derby manager, Jim Smith disclosed last week.

"The player has returned to Italy to finalise matters with Lazio and I would suggest that it will be all systems go after that. I am confident that Fabrizio will be a Derby player in good time for our pre-season tour of Estonia and Finland."

Now Smith's plans are in tatters. He sold Rory Delap to Southampton for $6 million to finance Ravanelli's arrival and must now work quickly to sign up another striker.

Negotiations with Ravanelli had stalled over his high wage demands and hope of securing a two-year contract, but following talks with former Rams favourite Stefanio Eranio, the Silver Fox agreed to take a pay cut in exchange for a longer contract.

Ravanelli, a former Middlesbrough play,reportedly agreed "in principle" to a two-year contract after talks with Smith were assumed to have progressed well last week.

The ex-Juventus striker, who has played 22 times for Italy, scored 35 goals in a hugely-successful season with Middlesbrough in 1996-97, before moving to Marseille after Boro went down into relegation. He joined Lazio in January, last year.

Ravanelli: Second coming to the Premiership, now in doubt after rejecting Derby County offer.

VILLAREAL SWOOP ON GALCA

Romania international midfielder Constantin Galca has signed for Villarreal on a free transfer, the Spanish club said last week.

Espanyol agreed to release the player from his contract after admitting they could not afford to pay his wages.

The midfielder, who has won 65 caps for Romania, is reported to have signed a three-year contract with his new club.

Villarreal will be Galca's third Spanish team. He joined Mallorca in 1996 from Steaua Bucharest before moving to Espanyol two years later.

The 29-year-old appears, however, to have ended his international career after making himself unavailable for two World Cup qualifiers in June.

Villarreal also announced that they have signed central defender Sergio Ballesteros from Rayo Vallecano.

MILAN LOAN-OUT BA TO MARSEILLE

French international midfielder Ibrahim Ba has joined Olympique Marseille on a one-year loan from AC Milan, sources close to the French club said last week.

Marseille also hope to sign AC Milan's German international striker Oliver Bierhoff for an estimated $1.95 million, the sources said.

Ba, 27, who has won eight French caps, was born in Senegal.

He played for Le Havre and Bordeaux before joining AC Milan in 1997. He was loaned to Perugia in 1999 but suffered a serious knee injury.

Transfer News ... Transfer News ... Transfer News ...

Mendieta: Bound for Lazio in a mouth-watering deal.

Lazio lay-out $41 for Mendieta

Serie A club Lazio say they have signed unsettled Valencia captain Gaizka Mendieta in a deal worth $41 million.

"Lazio reached an agreement with Valencia last week for the transfer of Gaizka Mendieta," the Italian club said on its official website.

"We are now waiting for the player to accept the personal terms proposed by Lazio's directors."

A spokesman for Valencia said a transfer fee of $41 million had been agreed between the two clubs, which would place the 27-year-old player in sixth place in the list of the world's most expensive players.

The Italian club's president Sergio Cragnotti said he did not foresee any difficulties in reaching an agreement with the Spanish international.

"The player has already shown an interest in coming to Lazio and all that remains to be finalised are some economic details," he said.

Spanish television reported that the proposed four-season deal would see Mendieta earn close to 800 million pesetas ($4.16 million) a year, roughly double his present salary at Valencia.

A possible stumbling block to the player's approval of the deal is that Valencia have said they are keen to insert a clause preventing him from being sold on to Real Madrid in the future.

Real were widely believed to be the player's preferred destination following his announcement that he wanted to leave Valencia.

But the Spanish champions withdrew from the chase for the midfielder after Valencia made it clear they would not negotiate with their rivals.

Lazio have been looking to strengthen their midfield since pocketing $39.5 million from the sale of Argentine Juan Veron to England's Manchester United and a reported $35.3 million for Czech Pavel Nedved, who moved to Serie A rivals Juventus last week.

Olympiakos clinch Karembeu

Olympiakos Piraeus have signed French international Christian Karembeu from premier league club Middlesbrough for $3.14 million, the Greek champions said.

"Christian Karembeu arrived in Athens on Monday," a club statement said.

The 30-year-old midfielder agreed a two-year deal with Olympiakos worth $2.7 million, according to local media reports.

Karembeu began his career at Nantes before spells with Sampdoria, Real Madrid and Middlesbrough. The Frenchman has collected winners medals in the Champions League, World Cup and European championships.

Olympiakos signed Colombian international Jorge Bermudez last month from Argentina's Boca Juniors, and their president Socrates Kokkalis has promised more big name recruits in preparation for next season's Champions League.

Olympiakos have won five successive Greek league titles.

Christian Karembeu

PIRATES' COACH QUITS

Gordon Igesund has resigned as coach of South African champions Orlando Pirates a month after taking the popular Soweto-based club to their first title in seven years, club officials said last week.

Igesund, who turned 45 on Sunday, cited family reasons for his decision saying he could no longer work in Johannesburg with his family still living in the coastal city of Durban.

But Igesund, who played professional soccer in Austria, is expected to take over as coach of Cape Town club Santos, who won the Super Bowl (FA Cup) last month.

Santos officials confirmed they were discussing terms with him but said no decision had yet been finalised.

In May, Igesund was attacked by a group of Pirates supporters at a training session after a series of poor results in the run-in to the end of the season.

But the club still held on to win the South African Premier Soccer League and qualify for next year's African Champions League.

Igesund will buy out the second year of his contract with Pirates, officials added.

VALENCIA SWAPS KILY FOR LAZIO'S SALAS

Valencia president Jaime Orti has agreed terms with Lazio for the signing of Marcelo Salas.

The player-plus-cash deal will see Kily Gonzalez move to the Italian side, although Salas must settle a contract wrangle with Lazio before it can be completed.

Orti revealed details of the negotiations on Saturday night. Valencia will pay the Italians just $555,000 for Chile ace Salas, as long-time Lazio target Kily Gonzalez will go to the Stadio Olimpico as well.

Marcelo Salas: Heading for Valencia.

"We have reached an agreement with the player but that is useless if he can't sort out the problems he has with Lazio. It all depends on that," explained Orti.

"Kily is included in the transfer and he will leave. The problem is that there are many strands to this deal and it's difficult to manage them all."

Salas reacted furiously last summer when he felt double-winners Lazio were trying to offload him in an effort to avoid paying him a win bonus.

This latest row is similar, with Salas claiming that Lazio should pay up the remaining two years of his contract — about $6 million — because he is being sold against his will.

"We are waiting for a single call because now Salas must hold a meeting with the Lazio directors," added Orti.

The former River Plate star will be paid $3 million a season at the Mestalla, exactly the same as he earns at Lazio. Kily will join up with former Valencia team-mates Gaizka Mendieta and Claudio Lopez at the Stadio Olimpico.

Salas has struggled to hold down a regular place at Lazio and the club tried to sell him to Parma last season. Salas, though, refused to leave.

He was close to joining Real Madrid this summer and declared: "My dream is to score important goals which help Real win the Champions' League." Salas claimed at the time that he would only leave Lazio if he received an offer from Real.

Benfica move thrills Madrid's Cesar

Julio Cesar expressed his delight at completing his move to Portuguese giants Benfica from Real Madrid on Friday.

The Brazilian defender was reluctant to join the Lisbon Eagles on loan. Having spent the whole of last season on loan at AC Milan and Real Sociedad, he felt that the time had come for him to settle down at one club.

Julio Cesar: "I feel a mixture of delight and satisfaction."

"I feel a mixture of delight and satisfaction," declared the Brazilian after putting pen to paper on a two-year contract. "To have finally reached an agreement makes me very happy.

"Benfica is a club with a great history and is one of the biggest clubs in Portugal with a huge fan base who are very passionate about the club.

"They have not been champions for a few years, but it is a club that has the capability to be part of the European elite. I am going there with the desire to put them back on the map and fulfil their dreams of going back to the top."

Cesar joined Real Madrid from Valladolid when John Toshack came in for him in 1999, but failed to secure a first team place at the Bernabeu and was loaned out by Vicente Del Bosque last summer.

Nantes launch French Championnat

On Friday, 27th July, 2001, the French league, otherwise known as the Championnat will roar-off.

Defending champions, Nantes will kick-start the 2001/2002 campaign with an away tie against Bordeaux.

For Nantes, their fans will expect them to re-enact last year's cherished campaign where they blitzed the 17 other teams to clinch the title for the first time in eight, barren years.

As always, *ABSW* will provide weekly match results, round-up as well as an accompanying table to help our readers keep track of their favourite teams' progress.

Just last week, Nantes crushed Cup holders Strasbourg 4-1 to win the Champion's Trophy, the traditional curtain-raiser to the French season.

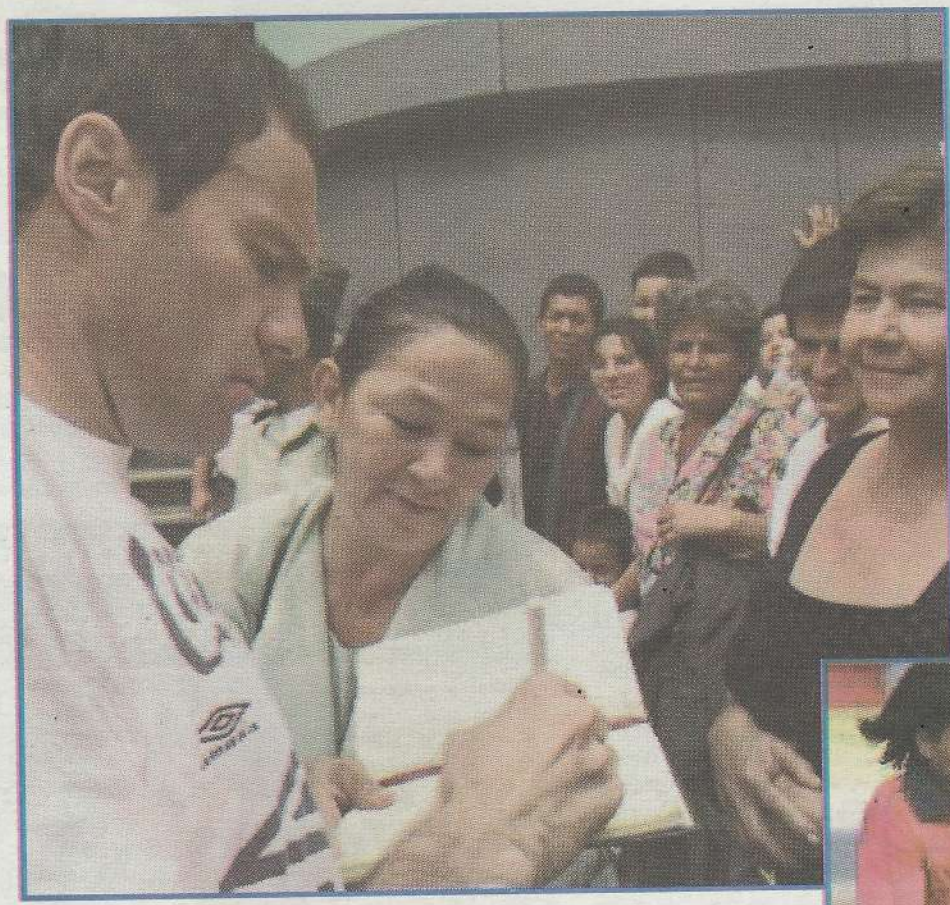
The result in front of a crowd of only 8,000 was doubly sweet for Nantes who lost the Trophy to Monaco last year and were beaten 4-1 by Strasbourg in the French Cup semi-final.

This time however, they look strong contenders for another run-away season.

Below are the fixtures for Week One:

Bordeaux v Nantes
Paris-SG v Lille
Lens v Lyon
Montpellier v Marseille
Bastia v Sedan
Lorient v Metz
Monaco v Sochaux
Rennes v Auxerre
Troyes v Guingamp

IMAGES OF THE COPA AMERICA



• (Clockwise from top left): Mexico's Alberto Rodriguez (left) challenges Chile's Eros Perez in their quaterfinal match.
• Costa Rica's striker Paulo Wanchope (9) controls the ball ahead of Bolivian Percy Colque in their third-round clash, last week.
• A soccer fan has his face painted with the Mexican and Brazilian flags.
• Mexico's Jesus Arellano (centre) tries to break away from Chile's Ricardo Rojas Trujillo (left) in their quarterfinal match.
• Victor Pua, coach of the Uruguay shouts at his players during the quarterfinal game against Costa Rica.
• Chile's goalie Sergio Vargas signs autographs for Colombian fans before his team played against Mexico in the quarterfinals.